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# NUUSLETTER

NORTHWOODS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

*A Beacon of Light in the Northwoods*

P.O. Box 253, Minocqua, WI 54548, <http://nuuf.com>

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## 2004 Coming Sundays

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### Taking the Pulpit

**Sunday**, September 5, 10 AM, Jonathon Patz "Health Effects of Global Warming"--  
Climate Change and Disease (See articles beginning on page 2)

**Sunday**, September 19, 10 AM, Rick Wambach, "The EU, The UU, and You"

**Sunday**, October 3, 10 AM, Rev. Denise Tracy

**Sunday**, October 17, 10 AM, Dr. Robert McKeich, "Everywhen - The Aboriginal  
Dreaming"

**Sunday**, October 31, 10 AM, Rev. Glenda Walker

**Sunday**, November 14, 10 AM, open date

**Sunday**, November 28, 10 AM, Terry Hoyt, "Guest at Your Table"

**Sunday**, December 12, 10 AM, Elinore Sommerfeld

### Adult Religious Education

On alternate Sundays we meet at 10 AM to discuss topics relating religious and ethical issues to current events and considering things that contribute to the spirit and meaning of our group.

We are getting ready to start an adult RE video program entitled American Religious History taught by Professor of History, Emory University, Patrick N. Allitt, Ph.D. "This course explores religious life in America from the first European contacts to the late twentieth century. It aims to explain why America has shown so much more religious vitality than any other industrial nation and why its religions are so numerous and diverse. It considers religion not only from the point of view of beliefs, ideas, and styles of worship but also as a guide to conduct in everyday life, and it investigates the connection of religious, social, economic, and political concerns. Biographical details and anecdotes about dozens of brilliant or eccentric religious figures illuminate the lectures, among them the Puritan

divine Cotton Mather; the founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith; the first Christian Scientist, Mary Baker Eddy; and the patriotic fundamentalist Billy Sunday who, during the First World War, declared: "If you turn Hell over, you'll find 'Made in Germany' stamped on the bottom!"

Join us on alternate Sundays for the series.

## Announcements

**Food Pantry News:** Do you know someone who needs the food pantry? If so, here are the distribution dates for the remainder of the year: Aug. 31, Sept. 7, Sept. 21 (our turn), Oct. 5, Oct. 19, Nov. 3 (Wed), Nov. 16, Nov. 23, Dec. 7, Dec. 21. This will also be posted at the Fellowship. If you'd like to volunteer for our turn in September, please let me know. I am always willing to accept donations of non-perishable food, diapers of all sizes, personal care items and money for the food pantry. If you have questions, please call me, Elinore Sommerfeld, 385-2407.

**The Alzheimer Memory Walk '04** will be held on September 18th, Riverwalk Center, Rhinelander and September 25th, Marshfield Clinic-Lakeland, Minocqua, and you are all invited to participate and donate. Registration begins at 8:30 AM, walk at 9:30 AM. Walk at your own pace, contribute to Alzheimer research, patient and family services. Checks can be made out to the Alzheimer's Association. I have been associated with the local and regional group for about ten years. Money is very carefully used and a range of services provided, such as the Memory Diagnostic Clinic, which is held in Rhinelander monthly, staffed by a team of professionals who meet with individuals and their families to aid in diagnosis. Anyone can access it, not by referral. Support groups for families are held in Minocqua, 1st Wednesday at 1:30 PM, Dr. Kate's Boardroom; Rhinelander, 3rd Thursday at 1 PM, Shiek Plaza (Trig's parking lot across from the post office). Questions? Please call 715 356 6540 or email [hauerj@newnorth.net](mailto:hauerj@newnorth.net) Joan Hauer

**UUWF Fall Retreat:** Women's Spirit Retreat – Maiden, Mother, Crone, - a woman's spiritual journey will meet in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, November 12-14. Join the UU women in our district for this fall retreat exploring the cycles of a woman's journey. The theme presentation is Exploring and Knowing Desire in a woman's life cycle. The presenter, Wendy Selene is a Jungian Analyst from Chicago. Workshops include Tarot, Croning ceremonies, creating rituals for life's stages, UU Prayer Beads and Cymbal, a beautiful group of UU women making and sharing music. Save the dates, registration materials will be available in early September. To request registration packets email [ssinnamon@ucevanston.org](mailto:ssinnamon@ucevanston.org). Women of all ages welcome! Join us.

**Wenda Sheard and Richard Thieret** can be reached at Hangzhou International School, 80 Dongxin Street., Bin Jiang District, Hangzhou China 310053; [wsheard@seischina.org](mailto:wsheard@seischina.org)

## **Joys & Concerns**

We are now officially designated as a UU Welcoming Congregation, thanks to the good offices of Elinore Sommerfeld.

### **Internationally Renown Environmental Scientist**

#### **Jonathan Patz-Speaks September 5**

Jonathan Patz, MD, MPH, is Associate Professor of Environmental Studies and Population Health Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he directs a university-wide program on Global Environmental Health. He is an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and also an Affiliate Scientist of the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR).

In 1998, he was appointed Co-chair for the US National Assessment on Climate Variability and Change health sector expert panel, and in 2002, Convening Lead Author for the United Nations/World Bank Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. Since 1994, he has been lead author on four United Nations assessment reports, including the Second and Third Assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and WHO monograph on climate change. He is Co-Editor for the journal, *Ecohealth: Conservation Medicine and Ecosystem Sustainability*, and Co-editor of the textbook, *Ecosystem Change and Public Health: A Global Perspective* (2001), and directs courses on this subject at the graduate and undergraduate levels. From 1996-2000, he was principal investigator for the largest US multi-institutional study on climate change health risks and has briefed the US Congress, Administration, and federal agency leaders. His areas of research investigation include effects of climate change on heat waves, air pollution and water- and vector-borne diseases, as well as the link between deforestation and resurgent diseases in the Amazon (with over 75 publications on these topics).

He has earned medical board certification in both Occupational/Environmental Medicine and Family Medicine and received his medical degree from Case Western Reserve University and his Master of Public Health (MPH) degree from Johns Hopkins University.

### **Dr. Patz will address Climate Change and Disease**

Many health outcomes and diseases are sensitive to climate, including: heat-related mortality or morbidity; air pollution-related illnesses; infectious diseases, particularly those

indirected transmitted via water and by insect or rodent vectors; and refugee health type issues linked to forced population migration.

## **Patz Reviews**

### **The Day After Tomorrow**

### **For The British Medical Journal**

The doomsday film thriller *The Day After Tomorrow* is based on global warming theory, whereby the infusion of freshwater into the north Atlantic from the melting of Greenland's glaciers stops the circulation of water via the Gulf Stream. Although the probability of this event is low, according to climatologists, the scenario of abrupt climate change has certainly caught Hollywood's imagination.

Not surprisingly, the prospect of extreme weather events also has caught the real concern of health experts (not just their imaginations), following on the heels of last year's devastating heat wave, as a result of which an estimated 15,000 people in France died in a matter of a weeks. The extent to which the severity of the European heat wave falls far outside the current distribution of weather is consistent with expectations of future climate change scenarios. Climatologists have long remarked that global warming will not simply manifest itself by a gradual climb in average temperatures. Rather, it is the frequency and intensity of extreme climatic events—such as heat waves, droughts, floods, and storms—that are expected to occur.

Extreme weather events such as severe storms, floods, and drought have claimed millions of lives during the past 20 years and have adversely affected the lives of many more as well as costing enormous amounts in property damage. On average, the number of people killed annually by weather disasters between 1972 and 1996 was about 123 000, most of them in Africa and Asia. For every one person killed in a natural disaster, 1000 people are affected, either physically or through loss of property or livelihood.

River floods in central Europe left over 200 000 people homeless; more than 100 people were killed, and due to climate change such floods are projected to increase. Degradation of the local environment can also contribute to vulnerability from flooding. For example, Hurricane Mitch, the most deadly hurricane to strike the western hemisphere in the past two centuries, caused 11,000 deaths and thousands of others were missing in Central America. Many fatalities occurred as a result of mudslides in deforested areas.

Studies of the effect of climate change on food production show that yields of cereal grains are likely to decrease in the tropics where many countries are already under water stress. In particular there is concern that climate change may increase the extent of malnutrition in Africa, and there is currently widespread evidence of under-nutrition in countries of central, southern, and eastern Africa. Drought also leads to forest fires, which in

some locations (especially Malaysia and Brazil) have been associated with an increased risk of respiratory disease, eye problems, injuries, and fatalities.

The El Niño phenomenon is the strongest short term driver of climate variability worldwide (excluding seasonal variability). It already causes natural disasters that pose health risks, particularly droughts, on a global scale. The difference in numbers of people affected by disasters between a pre-El Niño and post-El Niño year is on average around 2.7% of the world's population. A large number of case reports and a smaller number of time series analyses over more than one event show a range of impacts of El Niño on health. The most consistent associations are with malaria epidemics in parts of Latin America and South Asia, but outbreaks of cholera, hantavirus infection, Rift Valley fever, and other diseases have also been associated with El Niño. Although this is still being debated, more and more climatologists believe that global warming may increase the frequency and intensity of El Niño events: not good news for the health sector.

Although extreme weather variability affects injuries, fatalities, and the incidence of diseases such as malaria, we must not lose sight of the myriad of other diseases and health outcomes affected by more subtle long term climate change. Mosquito borne diseases, such as dengue fever and encephalitis, are generally more influenced by ambient conditions than diseases passed directly from human to human. Formation of ozone air pollution is hastened by warmer temperatures. Excessive rainfall and runoff can lead to large numbers of microorganisms entering drinking water, and outbreaks of waterborne disease have been associated with heavy rainfall events in the United States and elsewhere.

Although the doomsday scenarios may be far from reality, the slower march of climate change still presents a formidable challenge for the health sector and society as a whole. A tidal wave inundating a city is an easily identifiable disaster that, given enough warning, people may escape from. The many health effects posed by climate change will arrive through numerous convoluted pathways and will require interdisciplinary analyses and integrated prevention planning.

## **Minutes of NUUF Board Meeting, July 9, 2004**

**In attendance:** Terry Hoyt, Joan Hauer, Alan VanRaalte, Tom Somerfeld, Mark Bruhy, Julie Wambach, Doris Eberlien and Sharon VanRaalte.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by President Hoyt.

**Approval of May Board Meeting Minutes:** Alan moved that the May Board meeting minutes be approved, Tom seconded the motion and the motion carried. With regard to a question raised about the monthly Board meeting notes, the Board reiterated that monthly meeting notes will be submitted to the NUUF newsletter following approval at monthly Board meetings.

**Treasurer's Report:** Tom distributed the monthly/year end Treasurer's report, which has been included with the July Board meeting notes. Joan moved that the report be approved, Alan seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Committee on the Ministry (CM):** Discussion on the CM began with a brief review of the Survey on The Ministry, which was distributed on April 18, 2004 (the results are presented in the May Board meeting notes). As this relates to the CM, Julie Wambach then presented a summary of recent discussions regarding a proposal to redefine the CM. These discussions involved CM members (Julie, Tim Kratz and Joe Strauss) as well as Terry Hoyt. The CM wants the Board and Congregation to understand that the committee does not serve the traditional role of other CMs, particularly as they are defined in the UU bylaws. Rather, the NUUF CM sees itself as a committee that serves to address the ministry of the entire congregation. The Board agreed that the NUUF CM should define itself in a manner that best serves the needs of the Congregation, rather than simply meeting the UU bylaw definition

As such, the CM has proposed two actions, which are presented in a memo that has been included with the monthly Board meeting notes. To summarize, the first proposed action is to organize a transition workshop in August that would involve Central Midwest District representative Angela Merkert. Secondly, they propose the preparation of a formal statement of the CM's responsibilities, which will include a description of election and membership processes. The statement of responsibilities will be developed in a manner that allows flexibility. Specifically, as circumstances of the NUUF change, the statement of responsibilities can adjust to those changes. Following Julie's presentation, the Board approved the CM's recommendations and requested that they proceed with both recommended actions.

**Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC):** The Board and LRPC representative Doris Eberlien discussed LRPC activities. Included in these discussions was the proposal to develop a long-range plan. It was noted that former minister Sydney Morris recently shared a long-range plan with the Board, one she thought well prepared and one that may serve as a model. It was agreed that development of such a plan by the LRPC should be pursued.

**Building Expansion Committee (BEC):** The BEC June meeting notes were shared with the Board, and have been included with the monthly Board meeting notes. BEC member Doris Eberlien represented the committee, and among other issues, building expansion plans were discussed. Though the Congregation has not recently addressed the issue of building expansion, the Board agreed with the BEC's recommendation to work with the North Central Technical College design program in the development of alternatives for building expansion. Additionally, the BEC will confer with Morton Builders of Wausau to secure cost estimates. As Doris noted, there is no charge or financial commitment for proceeding with these actions. Further, having designs and cost estimates on file will provide the

Congregation an easy reference in addressing expansion in the future.

**Membership Committee (MC):** Sharon VanRaalte, representing the MC, informed the Board that “The History of Northwoods Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship” has been completed. Further, she noted that Lakeland Union High School has printed copies of the history. The MC has recommended that one copy of the history be provided to each membership household at no cost. The MC further recommends that if additional copies are requested, they can be provided with a donation of \$3.00 per copy. The Board fully endorsed the MC’s recommendations.

**Other Committees (Non-Standing):** There are a number of committees created under the authority of the Board of Directors. They include: Social Activity, Hospitality, Publicity, Finance, Building and Grounds, Long Range Planning, Endowment, and Building Expansion. Terry summarized the roles of these committees, and asked the Board membership if each should continue to function in the new fiscal year. The Board agreed that all serve to address important issues and that none should be dissolved.

**Proposal for A New Committee:** Terry suggested that in lieu of a minister, the Board sanction the creation of a “Pastoral Care Committee.” Such a committee would serve the needs of congregation members who experience personal crisis or tragedy. Further, the Committee, or a Committee member, would serve as NUUF representative on the “Lakeland Ministerial Committee.” The Board agreed that this proposal has merit and should be shared with Congregation membership.

**NUUF Annual Meeting Notes:** Notes from the June 2004 annual meeting are in draft format, and as stated in the bylaws, they cannot be approved until the 2005 annual meeting. Terry noted that not all members were in attendance, and since issues of importance to all members were discussed, he asked if unapproved meeting notes could be distributed to members of the Fellowship. The Board agreed that the unapproved notes should be distributed.

**Welcoming Congregation:** Elinore Somerfeld attended the recent National Convention and discovered that the NUUF was not listed as a Welcoming Congregation. Though the Congregation unanimously endorsed involvement as a Welcoming Congregation on December 14, 2003, Elinore discovered that the Fellowship has not completed the reporting process. Elinore asked the Board if she can proceed with completing the reporting process, the Board fully endorsed her request and thanked her for her efforts.

**Building Use Request:** The “Drumming Group” has requested to use the building on August 11 and 25, and the Board approves this request.

**Other Business:** With regard to money received through the recent auction, a Congregation member voiced concern regarding the disposition of these funds. The Board has asked the Treasurer and Finance Committee membership to develop a procedure to address the disposition of these funds, along with monies received through other fund raisers and

donations.

Joan informed the Board that the American Cancer Society's annual Relay for Life is scheduled for July 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. The Relay serves as a fund-raiser for cancer research. The Board endorsed the Fellowship's involvement, and Joan has agreed to prepare a notice for the July NUUF newsletter that will call for participants in a NUUF Relay team as well as acceptance of donations for this important cause.

The Board approved disbursement of funds for payment of a gift for departing minister Sydney Morris. The funds will be charged to the Board's Discretionary Fund.

**Next Meeting Date:** The August Board meeting will take place at the Fellowship on Friday August 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Bruhy, Secretary

## NUU Views

**Question:** Republican Party operatives are forcing the country toward religious wars between Christian fundamentalist evangelicals, who want a Christian state with a Christian curriculum and laws informed by their values, and those who would maintain the diversity of our essentially secular society. Hoping not to engage in a religious civil war, the likes of which we escaped from when we migrated to this country, how best ought we to confront this political strategy?

**Answer** from Jerry Buerer: One brief point of elaboration. A distinction should be made with respect to the term "fundamentalist" and the term "evangelical." Often individuals are both, but need not be. Fundamentalists believe in the infallibility of the Bible (as they see it); evangelicals believe in converting people to the Christian gospel. For example, the Amish and orthodox Jews are fundamentalists, but certainly not evangelicals.

Those people who claim this nation was founded on Christian principles amaze me. Do they want to take credit for the genocide practiced on the native population? Do they want to take credit for the establishment and perpetuation of slavery? True, in the beginning a small number of people sought religious freedom in America, but the vast majority of people who migrated here came for economic reasons, not religious ones. The Declaration of Independence mentions God, but a qualified God. It reads "nature's God," which some might justifiably interpret as a Jeffersonian nod in the direction of paganism. No mention is made of any "Judeo-Christian" God.

Suggestions for confronting the political strategy of the religious right? Things like supporting the American Civil Liberties Union might help. The same for letters to the editor and calls to "talk radio" and backing politicians who support civil liberties, regardless of party affiliation, makes sense, from financial support to literature drops. Supporting the

“Mainstream Coalition,” a fairly new group that monitors ministers and churches and challenges their tax-free status if they fail to observe IRS guidelines for non-profit organizations is another possibility. Remember, mighty oceans and mighty lands spring from tiny drops of H<sub>2</sub>O and tiny grains of sand. If that’s not a fast enough process, maybe some of us should run for public office.

One can also hope that time takes its toll on this right wing movement. U.S. history has several examples of fervent religious movements coming, but then thankfully going. Finally, if you’re inclined to prayer, you might want to pray that this happens in this instance. Even if It doesn’t help, it might not hurt.

**Answer** from Jerry Woolpy: The values of our religion serve us best when they can act as a check on our attitudes and behavior. If we can resist the temptation to claim “God” on our side and instead ask what principles of peace and justice our traditions call forth for a particular situation and how well we are living up to them, we can claim faith. If it is the other way around our faith claims us and that is not satisfactory. Some of our fundamentalist and evangelical Republican countrymen are not living up to their faith claims as Christians. Our best counter is to live up to our faith claims as Unitarian Universalists (or in my case as a Reform Jew).

The **question for the next NUUsletter** is “Having considered the history of our fellowship from various points of view, what do you consider special about this congregation?” Send answers by Sunday, October 3, to [jerryw@earlham.edu](mailto:jerryw@earlham.edu). ▪

## Getting the NUUsletter

In addition to the usual Microsoft Word format, the NUUsletter is available in Adobe PDF format that is readable by any computer, Mac or PC. If you do not have an Adobe Reader you can download one free at

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

With this software the NUUsletter will be formatted as it is in Microsoft Word and the Word program will not be required. Let me know if you want it sent to you in PDF format,

[jerryw@earlham.edu](mailto:jerryw@earlham.edu).

Previous NUUsletters and the congregation directory are available at nuuf.com. Click on "Members Only." The user name is NUUF. But you need to remember the secret password. If you have forgotten it, contact me--Jerry Woolpy.

**Next NUUsletter Deadline, Sunday, October 3, 2004**

**NUUsletter**  
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