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# NUUSLETTER

NORTHWOODS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

*A Beacon of Light in the Northwoods*

P.O. Box 253, Minocqua, WI 54548, <http://www.newnorth.net/~beckratz/nuuf/>

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## 2002 Coming Sundays

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### Taking the Pulpit

**Sunday**, 10 AM, June 16, Rev. Sydney Morris

**Sunday**, 10 AM, June 30, Betsy Schussler

**Sunday**, 10 AM, July 14, Rev. Sydney Morris

**Sunday**, 10 AM, July 28, Jerry Woolpy

**Sunday**, 10 AM, August 11, Jerry Buerer

**Sunday**, 10 AM, August 25, Joan Hauer

### Adult Religious Education

On alternate Sundays at 10:30 AM, when we do not have services, we discuss topics relating religious and ethical issues to current events and we consider things that contribute to the spirit and meaning of our group. ▪

## Notes from the President

In a few weeks, my term as president will come to an end. Thanks to all of you for your support and your tireless efforts on behalf of the Fellowship. It sure felt like we accomplished a lot in the last year, but it wasn't until the planning meeting we held a few weeks ago that I realized just how much we had done.

On May 19th about 20 of us gathered in a planning session to identify progress made in the last year and points of emphasis for the coming year. Angela Merkert from the District Office facilitated the meeting. As we started listing our accomplishments, it quickly became apparent that we did a lot in the last year. Here, in no particular order is the list we generated at the meeting. In my opinion this is a very impressive list.

- organized a Social Justice Forum  
on Response to Terrorism
- called Sydney to be our minister
- expanded the parking lot
- paid off the "mortgage" on our

- building
- increased our budget by about 30%
- conducted planning for a building addition
- welcomed new members
- received a new organ
- held Seder dinner for the community
- funded and took 13 youths to Boston
- participated in Food Pantry
- cleaned up our stretch of Hwy 47
- donated Fair Share to both national and district offices
- completed our playground

We identified three areas of emphasis for the next year: review our board and committee structure, attract more young families, and increase our committee presence through social justice activities.

I think we should give ourselves a collective pat on the back for our accomplishments of the past year. Let's also roll up our sleeves and look forward to the next year.

Peace,  
Tim Kratz ▪

## **Thanks Tim**

As many of us have already said in your presence and to each other, we thank you for the careful guidance you have provided as our president and leader these past two years. We suspect that no other person could have united our energies and brought us to consensus on so many important tasks. We are grateful for this and for the course you have set for our future. Congratulations for a job well done. ▪

## **Joys & Concerns**

Jean Polfus set a new record for the Lakeland Union High School pole vault at eight feet, six inches! And she gave the farewell address for seniors at this year's graduation. She is the Salutatorian. Among the Athletes honored for the month of April, she's noted for the pole vault and her team's most consistent and talented runner in the 800-meter, 1600-meter, and 3000-meter. Jean is in the Lakeland Union High School National Honor Society.

Megan Kratz is also in the Lakeland Union High School National Honor Society with noted accomplishments as the AYSO soccer team coach, Big Brother-Big-Sister, band, jazz band, Key Club, and pep band. She will attend UW Madison, then plans to join

the Peace Corp, before returning to education to get a graduate degree.

Thanks to the following people who helped Paul Braunstein distribute 85 bags of food at the Food Pantry on May 28<sup>th</sup>: Terry and Terri Hoyt and their son Keith, Pat Buehler, Sharon and Alan VanRaalte, and Roger Smith. ▪

## **Announcements**

Brenda Danielczak will be providing childcare for our Sunday services during the summer months. She is a recent graduate of Nicolet's Early Childhood Program and currently works full time at Reed's Treehouse Day Care. Her hobbies include camping, swimming, hiking, four wheeling, singing, reading, and poetry. Please welcome her to the fellowship for the summer. (Dawn Holt)▪

Jerry Buerer's summer telephone number at the island is 356-1038. ▪

UU Camp UniStar for individuals and families, Cass Lake, Chippewa National Forest in northern Minnesota announces twelve weekly sessions with a variety of program offerings: Latin Dance, Sailing and Literature, Islam, Yoga and Herbal Medicine, Art and Writing, Making Time for Family, Sailing and Drumming, Weaving and Ecology, Unity of Knowledge, Pottery and Baketry. Contact Gary Joselyn

[gyjoselyn@hotmail.com](mailto:gyjoselyn@hotmail.com). ▪

WomanSpirit Summer Conference in Watervliet, Michigan, August 2-4. Provides time and place to connect with land, sky, fire, and water, as well as other UU women and your inner self, and to remember and experience ancient Earth-based religions, play and dance under the sun, moon, and stars, and synchronize with the Dance of the Universe. Tia Chisholm [tiachisholm@hotmail.com](mailto:tiachisholm@hotmail.com) [www.womenandreligion.org](http://www.womenandreligion.org) Central Midwest District Women and Religion Committee. ▪

Saturday, August 3rd, the Kewaunee UU Fellowship in Houghton, MI has asked us to join them for a potluck picnic. Exact time and location will be in the next NUUSLETTER. It will be in held in the vicinity of Watersmeet, MI.

--Mary Ann Fields ▪

A Central Wisconsin regional conference on Faith and Global Climate Change is being planned for Sunday, September 22 (a Sunday that we have a Service scheduled). This is part of a Wisconsin state movement to get congregations of all faiths involved in education and action to stop global climate change. The one-day conference will be held at UW-Stevens Point. Similar conferences have been held in Madison, LaCrosse, and Milwaukee. NUUF ought to be involved. Contact Jerry Woolpy. ▪

## **More Hymnals Needed**

If you would like to help us purchase more copies of Singing the Living Tradition, Pew Edition, \$28. Please contact Joyce Barnes, who will arrange the purchase for the Fellowship. ▪

## **Minister's Musing:**

Every year Unitarian and Universalists from the North American continent gather together to worship, learn and take action at our General Assembly. This year during the third week of June I will travel as your delegate to Quebec City, and the 2002 General Assembly. The feeling of being with thousands of other UU's is profound. There will be services and workshops on the full range of theological, practical and creative aspects of being Unitarian Universalists. Delegates from each congregation will vote on matters on internal governance as well as social justice issues.

Each Assembly sends agree-upon issues back to the congregations for study, before final passage by the Assembly. This year's study resolutions addressed globalization and the war on drugs. While I have been encouraged to vote my conscience, I would like to as far as possible align our mutual consciences by discussing these and other questions of our UU public witness together. On June 16th, the program and the member workshop afterwards will focus on our history and future as guardians of social concern. We carry in each congregation the responsibility of our association's larger perspective on behalf of a world desperately in need of clear thinking and loving advocacy.

Next year's GA will be in Boston, and I understand that the Marquette Fellowship is renting a bus to go there. I hope you will consider attending then!

Faithfully,  
Sydney

(The Poems that follow are part of the Minister's Musing)

Graduation

I took your picture,  
your lunch box clenched in your hand,  
just moments ago.

Patricia Clark

Storm on a June Night

Another storm roaring through;  
it's after ten when the electricity snaps.

By one candle

we make a sanctuary,  
our own rift in the night.

By two candles

we make fat radish sandwiches.

By three candles

we make out the letters  
on the scrabble tiles.

By four candles

we make up our minds:  
it's time to extinguish them all.

Last of all, we turn out the lightning.

Linda Aschbrenner ▪

# Meet New NUUs

## Irma Braunstein

*Sharon and Alan Van Raalte* grew up on farms in Illinois. They have been married for 26 years. They started their marriage with Alan's four children and Sharon's three ranging from four to fourteen years, and successfully blended the two families. Sharon was a hairdresser, Alan a software designer in Rockton, Illinois. Now they have thirteen grandchildren with two more on the way.

They joined the Rockford UU Church in 1986 through a friend and became very active—Alan on the finance committee and Endowment Investment Committee. Both worked on an AIDS support group of which Sharon was Chair of the Social Activities Committee. Sharon was also head usher at the Rockford Church. Alan served on the local grade school board for seven years including four as its president.

One of their hobbies is collecting mission style furniture, which they studied extensively and became experts. Through buying and selling this furniture they financed trips across the country for the family of nine. They also bike, cross country ski, snowshoe, and canoe. Together they built much of their present home in Tomahawk..

Alan and Sharon found our fellowship by an article about our march for women's reproductive rights and our arrow on the roadside sign. They are delighted we are here for them and hope to contribute to our continued success. One of our UU study topics recently was living with less. I think Sharon and Alan are doing this successfully and happily. ▪

*Audrey and Jim Williams:* Audrey was born in British Columbia to a homesteading family. Jim was born in Texas. They met in Germany—she in the Royal Canadian Air Force, he in the United States Air Force. They married in Germany in 1958. After service they went to Texas where Jim got three degrees at the University of Texas. Jim then taught Sociology at UW-Eau Claire for three years and went back to Texas to finish his PhD. Then he returned to Eau Claire to become Chair of the Sociology and Anthropology Departments.

They are both active politically and very interested in what happens in the world.

The Williams have five children living in Minnesota and California. Audrey had a large bee farm and beeswax candle factory when they lived in Eau Claire where they became active UUs and started a Sunday school program. Earlier they had been UUs in Austin.

In 1999 they retired and moved to Park Falls where they can enjoy nature and have water for Jim's fishing. They love to travel and do active things outdoors when traveling and at home.

Jim reads five or six newspapers every morning starting with the London Guardian. He is on the Bioethics Committee of Price County and is Vice President of his lake association. Both Jim and Audrey are interested in and support Amnesty International.

Our fellowship adds a very special dimension to their retirement. ▪

## Appetite, A poem by Maxine Kumin

I eat these  
wild red raspberries  
still warm from the sun  
and smelling faintly of jewelweed  
in memory of my father

tucking the napkin  
under his chin and bending  
over an ironstone bowl  
of the bright drupelets  
awash in cream

my father  
with the sigh of a man  
who has seen all and been  
redeemed  
said time after time  
as he lifted his spoon  
men kill for this           ▪

### **NUUF BOARD MEETING** 4-10-02

**Present:** Tim, Ruth, Joan, Sydney, Patty

**Minutes** of last meeting: approved

**Treasurer's Report:**

Approved, 3-18-02 to 4-7-02  
expenses-\$1999.64  
revenue-\$2153.43  
balance-\$13,315.83  
3rd quarter report: to date,  
expenses-\$16,326  
revenue-\$21,964

**New Business:**

Speaker remuneration: Ruth expressed a desire to know the amount speakers are to be paid prior to their service. Joan reported that the Program Committee has established a consistent policy on speaker remuneration, which will be included in the annual report of that committee.

Seder dinner expenses: Receipts for over \$200 were submitted to the board by Paul Braunstein for the Seder dinner. Jerry had indicated prior to the dinner that there would be no cost to the fellowship. The board agreed to return the receipts to Paul and require him to go through a committee, probably the Program committee, to pursue reimbursement. (Paul subsequently decided to drop the matter.)

Building use for meditation group: The board approved building use for Scott Van

Egeren to hold open meditation sessions without charge, on Thursday evenings at 5:00. Tim is acquainted with Scott and will ask him to write an article for the NUUSLETTER.

Pledge drive brochure: The board approved the brochure Sydney and the finance committee developed. Patty will have pledge cards printed, including an explanation that Tim will compose, about prorating the minister pledge.

Committee on the Ministry: The board agreed that the committee will consist of Joe Strauss, Julie Wambach, and Irma Braunstein who will be replaced by Tim Kratz, when his term as president has ended. The committee can discuss the possibility of adding another person.

Goal Setting Session: Sydney has been working on and will continue to work on scheduling a goal setting session with Angela Merkert as a facilitator. The whole fellowship will be encouraged to join the discussion. There will be no charge for Angela's time.

Mortgage burning: The board decided to wait until Fields return from Nevada, so they can participate.

Miscellaneous: A new member ceremony will be included in the April 21 service. After the service Sydney will facilitate a new member orientation that all may attend. Sydney will be attending General Assembly. Sydney reported that the annual fee to belong to the Lakeland Ministerial Association is \$25. Sydney will check with Don about a form we need to submit.

**Next Board Meeting:**

Monday, May 13 at 5:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Buehler ▪

## Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry has had its first meeting and we want to share with you what we see as our charge. When she became our first Called Minister, Rev. Sydney Morris and the NUUF Board signed a Letter of Agreement that stated, in part,

...the relationship between the Fellowship and the Minister is complex and requires an environment of open communication, mutual trust, and cooperation. It is the intention of

both parties [the minister and the congregation], therefore, to work together in a spirit of good faith to make the partnership as effective as possible.

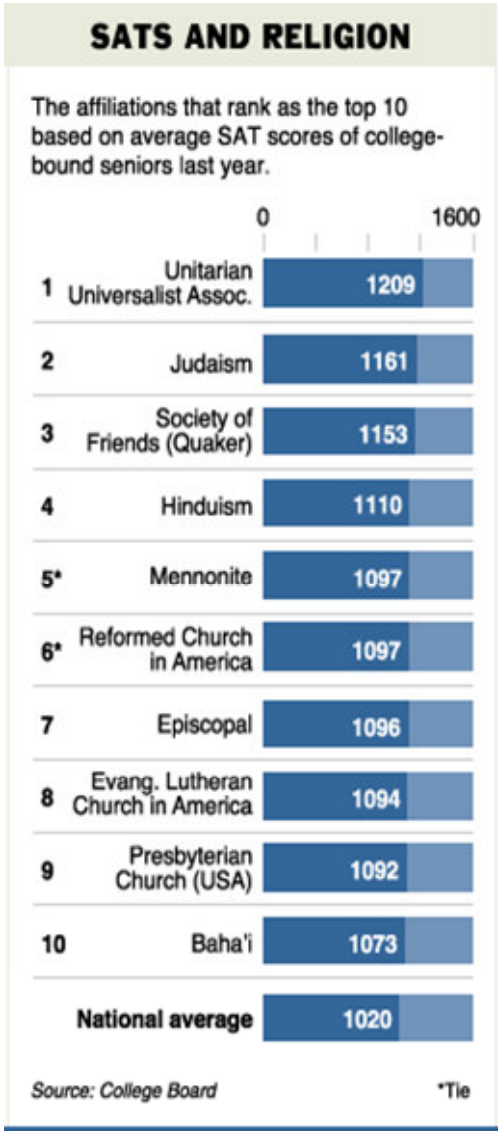
Our NUUF Board created the Committee on Ministry as a way to help provide good will between the minister and the congregation.

In the future, we may recommend to the Board that a general survey be sent to each Fellowship member. Such a survey would ask how you think our congregation is doing, and it seems to us too early for such a consideration. For now, if you have suggestions and you're not sure where to voice them, come to one of us. We are open to ideas of how our

Fellowship can best work with Rev. Morris. We want you to know us well enough to voice your opinions. As members of the Committee on Ministry, we agree to make an extra effort to know every one of you. It is a challenge we look forward to.

Sydney Morris, Joe Strauss,  
Irma Braunstein, Julie Wambach ▪

## Local & State Demographics





United States Census 2000

	Oneida	Vilas	Wisconsin
population	36,776	21,033	5,363,675
pop per sq mile	32.7	24.1	98.8
under 5	5%	4%	6%
under 18	22%	21%	26%
over 64	19%	23%	13%
high school grads	47%	46%	45%
college grads	9%	8%	10%

Source:<http://quickfacts.census.gov>

Recent census projections not completed yet. [www.doa.state.wi.us](http://www.doa.state.wi.us)

Wis pop expected to increase 6% by 2010, but the under 18s will decrease 3.5% while the over 64s increase gradually to 21% of Wis pop by 2030.

Locally the elderly increase is likely to occur faster and go higher.

## NUU Views

**Question:** The member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant

to affirm and promote...

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large..." The democratic process is much in the news these days especially as it concerns "free elections," which we might surmise do not constitute everything we mean by democracy. Just what are the essential features that make democracy so important to our non-creedal religion and make it an ongoing struggle here and around the world?

**Answer** from Jerry Buerer: First of all, I'm not so certain Unitarian-Universalism is a non-creedal religion—I think it's more a matter of us simply having a "looser" creed, if you will. But let's leave that one lay—I think I better refrain from worm can opening for a while.

Let's begin by looking at what others say about democracy:

*"Democracy substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few."* George Bernard Shaw

*"It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried."* Winston Churchill

*"Democracy is being allowed to vote for the candidate you dislike least."* Robert Byrne

*"Democracy is a great tool for spreading the blame for incompetent rule."* Author

Unknown (except to me)

The above quotes make the point, I believe, that while the democratic form of government leaves a lot to be desired, what better system is there? Oh sure, back in Poli. Sci. 101 the instructor made the point that in many respects, particularly expediency, a benevolent monarch is really the best ruler but, unfortunately, problems arise there too. For one, how do you keep them benevolent through an entire reign, and secondly, what about successors?

I think that to really understand the impact of democracy, it might be best to think about what it must be for adults who, heretofore, like their ancestors, have never been allowed to vote. Then in midlife, after a lifetime of subjection to the whims of a dictator or a colonial power such as Great Britain, suddenly they earn the right to cast a vote. What that must initially do for the individual's spirit and for their self-concept? It seems to me that it would be a basic step in the broader self-realization process, which we UU's value, and that's what makes it so important to our religion ( be it creedal or non-creedal).

**Answer** from Terry Hoyt: I know we are supposed to affirm and promote the democratic process, but the democratic process isn't always what it is made out to be. In order for the system to work the participants have to be responsible and ethical in how they make decisions. One reason our country is not a true democracy is because the founders of this country saw the flaw in absolute "democracy". This is why we are a republic, not a true democracy. Democracy can be a euphemism for mob rule--a lynch mob mentality.

When our member congregations affirm and promote the democratic process we do so in the belief that it is a check on tyranny. We believe that given the chance to express their opinion voters will do the right thing. What we really need from democratic process is the right to be heard. We also need that participants respect the right of others to be treated as an equal.

It's not the right to vote as much as the right to be recognized as a part of the

community. Jews in Nazi Germany would have found no comfort in a democratic vote on their fate. We have democracy in Wisconsin, but does that help solve Milwaukee's school system problems? We have democracy all over this country, but does that provide health insurance for the poor? The democratic process may give the poor and the oppressed an opportunity to be heard, but it is not the only requirement for there to be justice. That's why we have seven principles--not just one. ▀

Place  
Stamp  
Here

**The question for the next NUUSLETTER is:** According to a recent New York Times editorial (<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/02/education/02REGE.html>), ...*the mother of a high school senior and a weaver from Brooklyn, inspected 10 high school English exams from the past three years and discovered that the vast majority of the passages — drawn from the works of Isaac Bashevis Singer, Anton Chekhov and William Maxwell, among others — had been sanitized of virtually any reference to race, religion, ethnicity, sex, nudity, alcohol, even the mildest profanity and just about anything that might offend someone for some reason. Students had to write essays and answer questions based on these doctored versions. In an excerpt from the work of Mr. Singer, for instance, all mention of Judaism is eliminated, even though it is so much the essence of his writing. His reference to "Most Jewish women" becomes "Most women" on the Regents, and "even the Polish schools were closed" becomes "even the schools were closed." Out entirely goes the line "Jews are Jews and Gentiles are Gentiles." In a passage from Annie Dillard's memoir, "An American Childhood," racial references are edited out of a description of her childhood trips to a library in the black section of town where she is almost the only white visitor, even though the point of the passage is to emphasize race and the insights she learned about blacks.*

The folks who performed these edits probably believe in: *The inherent worth and dignity of every person; Justice, equity and compassion in human relations; Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth.. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning...* Or do they? Please explain from an informed UU perspective.

**(Please send answers by July 14 to [jerryw@earlham.edu](mailto:jerryw@earlham.edu).)**

### **Attention NUUSLETTER Readers**

Those who are not members may receive the NUUSLETTER by email free of charge. Members are encouraged to receive the NUUSLETTER by email or they may have it posted to them. Notify [jerryw@earlham.edu](mailto:jerryw@earlham.edu) to receive the NUUSLETTER by email. We give special thanks to the 55 out of 74 subscribers who, by use of email, have helped to reduce our NUUSLETTER budget by more than \$500. ▪

**Next NUUSLETTER Deadline, Sunday, July 14, 2002.**

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