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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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Volume 5, Number 8

November 18,

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## 2002 **Coming Sundays**

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### **Taking the Pulpit**

**Sunday**, 10 AM, December 1, Rev. Sydney Morris

**Sunday**, 10 AM, December 15, Terry Hoyt with the Guest at your Table Program.

**Sunday**, 10 AM, December 29, Dan Rondello, "2003"

**Sunday**, 10 AM, January 12, Rev. Sydney Morris

**Sunday**, 10 AM, January 26, Open Date. Please come forward and do the service.

### **Adult Religious Education**

On alternate Sundays at 10 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.

### **Note from the President**

As we move into wintertime we lose our snowbirds and have to work all the harder to get everything done and stay in touch. Things are moving along very nicely. I am attaching information regarding our committees and who is on them. (See below.) I'm looking forward to Thanksgiving dinner at the Fellowship. I know many can't make it there because of other commitments, but if you change your mind, please let us know and come for dinner.

Our Social Justice Committee met this Sunday. Audrey Williams and Sherri Zoar have agreed to share the chairmanship responsibilities for this extremely important committee. There will be another meeting this Wednesday evening after choir practice. We are brainstorming for observance of Martin Luther King Day and how to get our community more focused on the things that the holiday represents. It's an exciting project that I know

we will all be proud of.

I want to encourage all committees to keep minutes of their meetings so that we know when you had a meeting, who was there, and what if any action was taken. If you can then submit them to me I will share them with the Board and Rev. Morris. Terry Hoyt ▪

## NUUF COMMITTEE ROSTER

(11-2002)

**STANDING COMMITTEES:** These committees are in the By-laws of the Fellowship.

### **Spirituality (Program)**

**Committee:** The Program Committee facilitates Sunday programming, including both fellowship and outside presentations; serves as a resource for program ideas and formats; selects and arranges dates for visiting ministers/speakers; seating arrangements, cassette tape recording of the service and other supplies and items needed for the Sunday program; and coordinates with the treasurer the payment of speakers and with the Publicity Committee to publicize the program.

Mary Ann Fields, Co Chair, Joe Strauss, Co Chair, Paul Braunstein, Co Chair, Joan Hauer, Dan Rondello, Joyce Barnes and Terry Hoyt

**Religious Education Committee:** (Adult and Children): This committee is responsible for setting up programs to help the children of the fellowship to develop their own spiritual beliefs and ethics. The committee recruits teachers, adopts curricula, budgets and orders supplies and equipment for classrooms and coordinates child care for religious services. The committee is also responsible for the adult religious education program that runs on the alternate Sundays from our regular services.

Susan Knight, Andrea Billings, Terry Hoyt, Joan Hauer, Julie Wambach.

**Membership Committee:** This committee welcomes newcomers and visitors, providing them with information on the fellowship and Unitarian-Universalism. The committee also provides new member orientation, maintains the stock of literature and name tags, recruits Sunday greeters, and maintains the visitor's book and fellowship member's book. It is also responsible for updating the membership and friend's list.

Sharon VanRaalte, Chair, Doris Eberlein, Mary Ann Fields, Joan Hauer, Paul Braunstein, Patty Buehler,

**Social Justice Committee:** This committee provides leadership in the membership in expressing liberal religious ethics in action. The committee promotes community action on social issues to help support the principles, purposes and resolutions of Unitarian-Universalism makes information available to the fellowship and surrounding community

about social justice issues, and encourages social action at local, state, national and international levels.

Audrey Williams, Co-Chair, Sherry Zoar, Co-Chair, Dan Rondello, Beverly Strauss, Joe Strauss, Joan Hauer, Diane Reupert, Ruth Erbs, Nancy Junkermann, Candace Zahn Cain.

**Nomination** Committee: This committee of three members is selected at the annual meeting and is responsible for selecting candidates for Board positions at the following year's meeting.

Jerry Woolpy, Doris Eberlein, Sharon VanRaalte.

**Memorial Garden** Committee: This committee is responsible for the maintenance of the Memorial Garden. The committee develops landscaping, prepares a budget, maintains the records of the garden, and arranges for the memorial plaques. There are three members of the committee serving three year terms. One member is elected each year at the annual meeting. Members of the committee cannot succeed themselves according to the provisions adopted by the membership when the committee was established.

**OTHER COMMITTEES:** These committees are created under the authority of the Board

**Social Activity** Committee: This committee initiates and arranges indoor and outdoor social events for the membership.

Mary Ann Fields, Audrey Williams, and Paul Braunstein.

**Hospitality** Committee: This committee is responsible for Sunday coffee hour, volunteer sign ups, coffee hour supplies, coordination of the potluck at the annual meeting, other Fellowship potlucks and arranging housing for visiting ministers and speakers.

Beverly Strauss, Harley Erbs

**Publicity** Committee This committees produces the fellowship newsletter for members and friends, provides local newspapers with timely articles about the fellowship and its activities and develops and implements an annual advertising campaign.

Jerry Woolpy and Ruth Erbs

**Finance** Committee: This committee aids the treasurer in monitoring incomes, expenses, cash flow, assets and financial record keeping of the fellowship, makes recommendations on investments and payments of long term debts, directs the annual budget process, sends periodic pledge statements to members and oversees the annual canvass.

Ruth Erbs, Terri Hoyt, Dick Fields, Joe Strauss, and Patty Buehler.

**Building and Grounds** Committee: This committee oversees the basic upkeep and repair of the fellowship building and exterior property, including landscaping, snow plowing, cleaning, painting and minor equipment repairs, coordinates volunteer custodial work and maintains cleaning supplies.

Katie Egan-Bruhy, Chair, Patty Buehler, Dick Fields, Charles Reed, Alan VanRaalte, Sharon VanRaalte

**Long Range Planning** (Building Committee is replaced by this) This committee is involved with long range planning for growth and assuring a sound future for the fellowship.

Doris Eberlein, Chair, Don Barnes, Rick Wambach, Alan VanRaalte, Jerry Buerer, and Dick Fields.

**Endowment Committee** This committee is responsible for developing an endowment program for the fellowship.

Paul Braunstein, Terry Hoyt, Jerry Woolpy.     ▪

## Joys & Concerns

"War has always had an adversary who hardly ever comes forward as such but does his work in the stillness. This adversary is speech, fulfilled speech, the speech of genuine conversation in which men [people] understand one another and come to a mutual understanding. Already in primitive warfare fighting begins where speech has ceased; that is, where men [people] are no longer able to discuss with one another the subjects under dispute or submit them to mediation, but flee from speech with one another and in the speechlessness of slaughter seek what they suppose to be a decision, a judgment of God. War soon conquers speech and enslaves it in the service of its battle cries." -

Martin Buber

## Announcements

**Board Meeting:** November 19th, at 2 PM. (No Board Meeting in December.)

**Thanksgiving Dinner:** Don't forget our traditional gathering at the Fellowship for Thanksgiving dinner. All are invited.▪

**Human Rights Conference:** Organized by UUs for Social Justice, Saturday, December 7, 2002, at Agape House, 1046 W. Polk St., Chicago. Call 773-643-8061 or email [uusjajl@enteract.com](mailto:uusjajl@enteract.com). ▪

**Central Midwest District Annual Meeting:** April 4-6, at The Unitarian Church of Evanston.

**Midwest UU Leadership School:** Sessions July 16-23 or July 26-August 2, foster effective lay leadership to benefit congregations. Email Jan Steinmark, Registrar, [mrsmosaic@aol.com](mailto:mrsmosaic@aol.com)     ▪

## Minister's Message

## Unplugging the Holiday Machine

As the holidays approach, I remember the words of a colleague: the season "is a risk for us to take. Shall we allow ourselves to be touched by sentiment? Awakened by song and story? Drawn into festivities, when our joy depends upon the goodwill of others? Dare we risk the disappointment of hope raised high and excited expectations?" I think we can, but we have to be a little sensible.

Unexamined expectations can cloud our holidays. Let's look at three myths of the season, with an eye toward dispelling these myths and supplanting them with the ones that give us poetry and pleasure.

1. I must make this the best holiday season ever.
2. Holidays should make everything better.
3. Everyone else is having a terrific time.

Well, the stress we put on ourselves to outdo ourselves year after year is not helpful. I know one mother who announced that she would do nothing that year, she was fed up with it all! After her family began to believe her, they found themselves around the dinner table remembering what they liked best from their past traditions - and each member took charge of just one thing. It worked, and now each holiday is different - and each person feels vital to the celebrations. What's "best?"

Holidays survive because they meet a deep human impulse - to gather, to celebrate, to remember traditions and deepen spiritually with new insights. But the holidays won't bring the world to peace, or fix family strains. Holidays are like prayers. Prayers don't change things; people change things, and prayers support people. What will support you, and those you love this holiday season? Let these holidays be ones that strengthen us in our faith, our hope and our love.

You can bet that this is a time when everyone is bombarded by the commercial messages to consume, the expectations of their ideals, the sheer volume of events - especially with Thanksgiving, Chanukah and Christmas all coming on one another's heels this year. If you feel rotten and overwhelmed please remember that everyone does at some point or another - and the same is true for moments of glory. When we unplug the automatic expectations and comparisons, we can live into a truly humane season.

A few stubbed toes are inevitable in the enthusiasm of a holiday dance, but don't let them stop the music. Let it be a dance with varied rhythm and beat...the interplay of silence and song. Here's a Holiday Pledge:

- to remember those people who truly need my gifts;
- to express my love for family and friends through presence as well as presents;
- to rededicate myself to spiritual growth - for myself and those I love;
- to examine my activities in light of the true spirit of holy days;
- to initiate one act of peacemaking within my circle of friends and family.

My love in this holy day season,  
Sydney ▪

**Ode** by John Corrado, adapted.  
(selected by Rev. Sydney Morris)

'Twas the night before Christmas  
and all the UU's  
were desperately trying  
to pick and to choose  
what part of the holiday  
they still could use  
and not fudge on tenets  
or liberal views.

"Comparative religious  
studies -- they charm us,  
They're distant, don't touch,  
don't scare or alarm us.  
If Christmas were Hindu  
or Buddhist, like Zen  
we could quite safely  
believe in it then."

Come now, you folks  
who say humbug and skeptic  
sometimes the literal  
is too antiseptic  
You, too, are part of the  
world that you live in  
universal and joyous  
the messages given.

If you can't deck the halls  
with boughs that are holly,  
you can still have a  
spirit that is jolly

Christmas and Chanukah  
celebrate glories  
but right at the heart  
they are both inside stories.

Wrap up a gift  
sing a song  
light a light  
Merry Christmas to all:  
Outta sight! Dynamite! ▪

### **HYMNALS NEEDED**

A recent offer, made by a member, to purchase a hymnal for the fellowship prompted an informal count of our congregation's hymnals. The tally was 34, a number sufficient for attendees during winter months, but insufficient for the warmer seasons.

Some of us have, for good reasons, borrowed hymnals over the years, and may have forgotten to return them. If you happen to have one at home, please make a mental note to return it. (No fees, dues, or disapproving glances, only appreciative smiles await you.)

With the holidays approaching, some may wish to donate money for the purchase of a hymnal as a special gift to the congregation. Cost of one hymnal is \$28.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling charges. With the order of 5 or 10 hymnals, the S&H costs are less per volume. A bookplate acknowledging the gift will be placed inside the cover, and can include not only the name of the donor, but the name of a person in whose honor or memory the gift is being made. If you wish to contribute to the hymnal fund, please contact Joyce Barnes who will be coordinating the order. Her phone number is 358-2793. ▪

### **WAR PROTEST ADVERTISEMENTS**

A few weeks ago a number of us met to discuss America's apparent rush to war in Iraq. We agreed that a public expression of concern was appropriate and that time was critical. The issue was to be debated and voted upon in Congress in the next week or two. Many also felt that without a ground swell of protest from the public our nation might embark upon a unilateral preemptive attack at any time.

It was decided that we should act and this would be in the form of a newspaper advertisement asking that letters be written to our Congressional Representation. This would be done in the name of our Social Justice Committee to allow for the fact that not all Fellowship members necessarily agree with the opinion expressed.

The cost of the advertisements were Lakeland Times \$127.20  
Rhineland Daily News \$135.00

Total: \$262.20

A copy of the advertisement is posted on our bulletin board. This cost was not budgeted and was privately paid in advance in order to get them printed before it was too late to be effective.

If those willing to share the expense will donate \$10.00 by separate check our backers can get most of their money back. There will be a special collection Sunday, December 1st for this purpose. If you prefer you may mail your contribution to either Ruth Erbs or Joe Strauss.

We "talked the talk", now "walk the walk". Please do your share.

Thank you.

Joe Strauss   ▪

### **Northwoods UU Fellowship Board Meeting 9-17-02**

Present: Terry Hoyt, Sydney Morris, Joan Hauer, Ruth Erbs, Alan Van Raalte, Patty Buehler, and Harley Erbs.

Minister's report (see report below): Also, Sydney has been working with Terry Hoyt on communicating with committee members and scheduling meetings. A UU preview dinner at Sydney's home is scheduled for October 11. Charmaine Winters will attend. Sydney will contact Tobermans about coming. Sydney will talk to Sharon Van Raalte about chairing the membership committee. The Program Committee will meet October 6 at 8:45 am. Terry will email members about committee meetings, times and agendas.

Next Board Meeting: October 17, 10:00. November meeting to be held November 19, 10:00.

Installation Ceremony: Sydney reported plans are going well. There will be an article in the Lakeland Times. Ministers from Duluth, Wausau, and St. Paul will attend. Pete Peterson, UU minister from Des Moines will give the sermon. A CMD representative will also attend. A silver tea service has been donated to the fellowship.

Endowment Committee Report: After discussion, Alan Van Raalte moved to approve the endowment fund declaration as presented, and to direct the president to distribute this information to the fellowship, with the understanding that there will be a general membership meeting to approve the declaration. Joan Hauer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Building Use: Joan Hauer moved to allow the drumming group to meet on September 23, 7:00-9:30pm. Ruth Erbs seconded the motion. The motion carried. Alan Van Raalte moved to allow Ruth Jaeger's Awareness through Movement class meet on Thursdays at 7:00pm for eight sessions, for the fee of \$20, providing the insurance issue is satisfactorily resolved. Joan Hauer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Minutes of the last meeting: Alan Van Raalte moved to accept the minutes. Ruth



Erbs seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:8-05-02-9-12-02 expenses-\$2591.11  
revenue-\$6735.03  
bank balance-\$19,214.36

After discussion, Ruth Erbs reported she will pay national and CMD dues early. Patty Buehler moved to accept the treasurer's report. Alan Van Raalte seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Publicity: The publicity committee's budget is \$650. The board asks the publicity committee to make a proposal to the board if they decide they want to increase their budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Buehler ▪

### **Minister's Report to the NUUF Board September 17, 2002**

a. "Work with membership to continue the development of the congregation as an interdependent, cohesive religious institution where all people are actively supported and encouraged to participate."

-- The special service for September 11th was well attended and received.

--The challenges of developing times to meet with the President and committees is much talked about, and is sure to bear fruit.

--The Youth Group of 5 teens has met, enjoyed spirited discussion, and planned events for the year including community service and doing a program.

--Visiting, walks and phone calls have been venues for chats and counselling

b. "Strengthen the Fellowship's presence in the community..."

--Articles in the paper – one written by me, one interview on the Installation have drawn attention.

--I continue to membership in Rotary, meeting once a week, and to serve as Vice President of the Lakeland Ministers Association

c. "Promote Fellowship growth in the areas of membership, commitment, and deepening understanding of our faith."

--Monthly Sunday services are doing well

--The UU Review Sunday afternoon workshops are continuing. September's was on historical credos and group leadership skills; 25 attended.

--A UU Preview for prospective new members is being planned.

d. "Enhance the Fellowship's relationship with the broader UU movement."

--Ministerial colleagues, District congregations and colleagues in the UUA are aware of the installation and sending their congratulations. Four UU ministers will speak at the Installation ( the Revs Karen Gustafson, Paul Beckel, Oren Peterson and MaryBeth

O'Halloran) and the Northwoods Area District Rep Dolly Scott will speak.  
 --Marianne, Paul and I have begun inquiries into supporting local UU (Stevens Point, Marshfield) societies or individuals (Ashland) with speakers and visits.  
 --The Conserve School has invited me to visit with them to see if there is enough interest for a regular UU discussion group there. Rev. Sydney Morris ▪

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	BU				
REVENUE					
Pledging Units	35		133		
Midyear Pledges	10		180		
Sunday Donations	15		648		
Interest	0		30		
Trig's Donation	0		56		
TOTAL		376		142	
		==	===		
EXPENSES					
Ministry Salary &	3		9		
Ministry Housing		10		270	
Ministry Prof	3		7		
Ministry Pension		24		600	
Program		20		0	
Childrens R.E.		30		28	
Adult R.E.		10		0	
Music		75		25	
SPIRITUAL GRWTH	2		5		
Dues		36		322	
Publicity		65		302	
Social Justice		15		10	
UU Service Comm		70		0	
Meeting Fund		50		0	
COMM PRES &	6		3		

Newsletter	45		99	
Membership	20		20	
Hospitality	10		32	
Social Activities	10		0	
Finance	10		0	
Office Supplies	<u>30</u>		<u>37</u>	
MEMBERSH	1		1	
Bank Expense	0		0	
Natural Gas	50		65	
Electricity	40		89	
Snow Plowing	31		0	
Telephone	42		103	
Insurance	51		518	
Maintenance	27		11	
Building & Grounds	13		382	
Memorial Garden	<u>50</u>		<u>70</u>	
ORGANIZ GROWTH	4		1	
CONTIGENCY		137	0	0
BUILDING		500	0	0
MINISTER DISCR	<u>1</u>	0	<u>0</u>	
TOTAL		374		<u>100</u>
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## NUU Views

**Question:** In his recent pastoral letter, “Responding to the Threat of War,” UUA President, Rev. William G. Sinkford, quoted Olympia Brown. In these troubling days and all those that lie ahead, my deepest prayer is that we stand in this faith with Universalist Olympia Brown, who wrote, over one hundred years ago, “*Every nation must learn that the people of all nations are children of God, and must share the wealth of the world. You may say this is impracticable, far away, can never be accomplished, but it is the work we are appointed to do. Sometime, somehow, somewhere, we must ever teach this great lesson.*” (For full text of Sinkford’s message see <http://www.uua.org/news/2002/020920.html>) **Given the UU penchant for individual responsibility, under what circumstances and to what extent can we accept Rev. Sinkford’s moral leadership?** Moreover, is it reasonable for us to expect others to accept our attempts at moral leadership on the matter of war with Iraq? (Incidentally, unlike the UUA webpage, an unsystematic google review of the webpages of other religions--Lutheran, Baptist, Episcopalian, Catholic, Jewish--revealed little or no mention of Iraq although Methodists and Mennonites have now come out against the war in Iraq. In marked contrast Sinkford’s message leads at UUA.ORG.)

**Answer** from Wenda Sheard: I believe we can accept Rev. Sinkford's moral leadership if we believe his leadership accurately embodies our UU principles and purposes. If we interpret our UU principles and purposes in a different manner than Rev. Sinkford

interprets them, or if we have have knowledge of facts and circumstances different than those known by Rev. Sinkford, then we cannot accept his moral leadership with respect our impending military involvement against Iraq.

Despite the tricky nature of mixing national politics and religion, many religious leaders do just that. As I write this response, I notice that UUA.org website now has links to anti-war statements signed by leaders of dozens of religious organizations. Rev. Sinkford is not alone in his rush to make broad pleas regarding the sanctity of human life and the sentiments of Olympia Brown.

But we must remember our heritage of individual freedom of belief. The last line of our statement of purposes: "Nothing herein shall be deemed to infringe upon the individual freedom of belief which is inherent in the Universalist and Unitarian heritages or to conflict with any statement of purpose, covenant, or bond of union used by any society unless such is used as a creedal test." None of our UUA "creedal tests," which reside in our statement of principles, require us to blindly follow Rev. Sinkford's moral leadership. Indeed, we have an individual duty to engage in a "free and responsible search for truth and meaning."

Imagine for a moment a UU Member of Congress. Imagine that during a top secret government briefing, that UU Member of Congress learns information about Iraq that is not available to the general public. (Secret government information can and does exist far more often than we would like to believe it exists.) Imagine that UU Member of Congress weighs both that top secret information and our UU principles and purposes before voting in favor of war against Iraq. Do we expel that UU member of Congress from UUism for failing to follow Rev. Sinkford? Certainly not.

Surely Rev. Sinkford recognizes that his broad anti-war statements and quotations will never substitute for every UUs free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Surely Rev. Sinkford recognizes that every UU has access to a different set of information, beliefs, and fears about the Iraq controversy. We must never allow moral leadership to morph into blind obedience.

**Answer** from Alan VanRaaltes: I believe that we can accept Rev. Sinkford's moral leadership just as we accept the moral leadership of Mohandas Gandhi, Jesus, The Buddha, The Dalai Lama, Abraham Lincoln, Robert Ingersoll, Moses, Martin Luther King, Jr. or any number of other moral leaders recognized throughout the world and throughout history. That is, we listen to or read their teachings, and consider their applicability to the moral dilemma at hand. From their guidance we can formulate our own moral positions and try to live by them and convince others, through reasoned dialogue, to accept, or at least consider, those positions. Throughout the dialogue process we must try to remain open to others' ideas and arguments and modify our positions accordingly as we become aware of new facts or consider the question from their perspectives. We must also temper our own arguments

with respect and love. By so doing, we should not expect others to accept our moral positions out-of-hand, but hope that they arrive at the same conclusions through logic, reason and respectful dialogue.

**Answer** from Jerry Buerer: Regarding the first part of the question, as an individualistic UU, I will accept Rev. Sinkford's moral leadership when I agree with him--otherwise I will resist, which is the same as I would do with any leader of an organization to which I belong. Regarding the second part of the question, it is probably not reasonable to expect many others to accept our attempts at moral leadership on the matter of war with Iraq since basically, our nation seems to be led at this particular time in history by numerous warmongers, who, given the results of the November 5 elections, now have grounds to believe that a majority of voters support their warmongering. One would think we had learned a lesson in Vietnam. Evidently, we didn't. It will be interesting to see (1) if, indeed, history repeats itself and (2) how, in the longrun, our nation's arrogance of power plays out. I can't help but wonder if, when other past civilizations had entered their periods of decline, whether there were voices of dissent similar to Rev. Sinkfords, and, if there were, just how many people paid any heed whatsoever?

**The question for the next NUUSLETTER is:** In the current issue of the World (page 30), UU Minister Rosemary Bray McNatt discusses why Martin Luther King Jr. considered but did not take up her liberal religion. She quotes King (1960), "There is one phase of liberalism that I hope to cherish always: its devotion to the search for truth...[But, King concludes]... Reason, devoid of purifying power of faith, can never free itself from distortions and rationalizations." But is there a place for faith in Unitarian Universalism and if so how does it inform the search for truth? **Please send answers by November 17th to [jerryw@earlham.edu](mailto:jerryw@earlham.edu).)** ▪

### **Attention NUUSLETTER Readers**

The NUUSLETTER is now available in Adobe PDF format that is readable by any computer, Mac or PC, which has downloaded the free software reader from Adobe.com. With this software the NUUSLETTER will be formatted as it is in Microsoft Word, but the Word program will not be required. Let me know if you want it in this format, [jerryw@earlham.edu](mailto:jerryw@earlham.edu).

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, January 16, 2003.** Note there will be an interval of 8 instead of the usual 6 weeks between this NUUSLETTER and the next one.

**NUUSLETTER**  
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED