



# Stirrings From Windmill Hill

## *News and Notes from Mount Vernon Unitarian Church*

April 16, 2006

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Editor: Mimi Stevens ([newsletters@mvuc.org](mailto:newsletters@mvuc.org))

### **The Board in brief (Raleigh Romine)**

At our regular meeting on April 4, **Wendy Burns** presented a draft charter of the MVUC Nominating Committee developed from the current operating procedures of the Committee and including additions concerning relations with the Minister and requirements for nominations to the BoT. **Georgia Pourchot**, speaking on behalf of the current Nominating Committee, presented objections to the proposed charter, stating that the Committee is uniquely chartered in the Bylaws and does not need a separate charter from the BoT. After spirited discussion, the BoT decided to take no action at this time.

**Lisa Napier** presented the final report of the DRE Search Committee recommending **Meagan Henry**. The BoT discussed salary and fringe benefits and unanimously voted to extend an offer to Ms. Henry. After leaving the meeting, Lisa communicated the offer to Ms. Henry and reported to the BoT her preliminary acceptance of the offer.

The BoT received a draft report from the Safety Committee chaired by **Laura Walker**. A range of issues ranging from fire extinguisher placement to first aid kits were reported. The BoT will provide feedback to Laura as well as finalizing the Safety Committee charter. Charters were approved for the Publicity Committee and Program Council. During the discussion it was noted that the Sunday coffee coordinator position is unfilled. There may be no coffee in the Commons on Sundays unless a volunteer steps forward.

**Bill and Lynn Alsmeyer-Johnson** presented proposals including a Call to Action on Reproductive Rights from the Social Action Task Force for ratification at the Annual Meeting. The BoT discussed plans in general for the Annual Meeting including the Agenda and Bylaws changes.

The board received reports from **Rev. Louis Schwebius**, **Donna Bledsoe** and **Barbara Stoddard**. **Rev. Schwebius** noted that his apartment is being converted to condos and he will be occupied with finding a new place. Due to this he will be unable to attend GA this year.

The BoT received the current status of the Pledge Campaign. The pledge total to date is \$291,272 corresponding to 71% of the goal. Follow-up letters have been sent to members who have not returned their pledge cards.

**Ric Sears** reported that the lease for Fort Hunt Preschool has been finalized and sent to the school. The BoT approved the charter of the Fort Hunt Preschool as presented by **Wendy Burns**.

### **From the Treasurer ... (Al Erickson)**

The March 31, 2006, financial report shows:	March	Fiscal Year to date	Budgeted
INCOME	\$42,539	\$331,304	\$483,810
EXPENSES	\$46,784	\$348,463	\$483,810

### **The search has ended! (Lisa Napier)**

Meagan Henry has accepted our offer to become MVUC's new Director of Religious Education. She is the part-time Youth Programs Coordinator for both the Tennessee Valley UU Church and the Oak Ridge UU Church. She is currently teaching Religious Studies at the University of Tennessee and has taught and developed Montessori curricula.

She brings with her a lifetime of UU experience and passion, as well as her daughter, Starling, and her husband of only 5 months, James.

She is looking for housing and has asked whether anyone at MVUC might have something available in July. She is expecting something temporary, 1-3 months, until she can find something for herself, but is willing to consider something more long-term. Please contact the office if you can help.

As a congregation, we will need to welcome her. If you have any ideas or would like to help organize something, please email **Lisa Napier**.

Please make an effort to thank the members of the Search Committee for their hard work: **Nancy Barkume**, **Kristin Calhoun**, **John Henrehan**, and **Lisa Napier** (Chair).

***For RE News, see insert***

## **MVUC's annual Earth Day Fair (Suzanne Cleary)**

Celebrate Earth Day by participating in MVUC's third annual Earth Day Fair on April 23 from 12:30 p.m. until 3:30 p.m., immediately following second service. Join us for fun for all ages. Here's a sample of what's planned as we celebrate our Earth home and the interconnected web of all existence:

• Children's activities • Labyrinth walk • Information on EcoStewards Alliance and Study Circles • Raptors from the Raptor Conservancy of Virginia • Tour of the Greenhouse and Native Virginia plant sale • Demonstration of Earth-friendly hybrid cars • Lunch • More!

To volunteer or for more information, call **Nance Cedar**.

## **Wisdom Years visits Memorial Walks (Bev Southerland)**

On April 25 the Wisdom Years will present an informative program defining the Memorial Walks history and continuing service to the members of Mount Vernon Unitarian Church. **Wendy Burns** will explain the way the Walks came into being and how any member of MVUC can become a member of the Memorial Walks. If weather permits, we'll go down to the gardens and view the Walks as part of the program. Be there! 10:30 until noon.

## **Paths of Contemplation (Peg Bartel)**

The MVUC Contemplative Group is offering a workshop on paths of contemplation — a sampling of contemplative methods from many traditions. Participants will learn and experience time-honored practices including Tai Chi, Qi Gong, chants, sitting and walking meditation and prayer. The workshop will be held at Hollin Hall in the fireplace room and sunporch on May 7 from 9:30 to 11:00 am. The workshop will be led by **Linda Lloyd, Peter Mosley** and **Peter Pocock**. Linda is an acupuncturist and practitioner of Qi Gong movement and meditation. Peter Mosley is an adjunct instructor at the Virginia Theological Seminary and the cantor of the Contemplative Group of MVUC. Peter Pocock is a long-time student of Tai Chi and Daoism. He also studies calligraphy as a form of meditation. Join us for 90 minutes of exploration of ancient meditative practices.

## **History Forums continue (Linda Jemison)**

The Viet Nam War and MVUC's response will be the focus of the History Forum on Sunday, May 7. Founding member Al Searle will lead the program. Everyone is invited to join in the Fireplace Room in Hollin Hall, 12:30 – 2:00 pm. Light refreshments will be provided.

In coming months as schedules permit the History Forum will focus on the Hollin Hall Gardens and the Memorial Walks, and MVUC's Open Mic Coffeehouses.

## **Workenanny rescheduled for May 7 (a busy day at MVUC!)**

In addition to the Contemplative Workshop and the History Forum, MVUC's Spring Workenanny has been rescheduled to May 7. Sign-up sheets will be available at the Earth Day Fair on April 23. Visit the Workenanny table and find out how to volunteer!

## **MVUC Youth honored by JPD**

On April 1st, at the Celebration Service held during the JPD Annual Conference, MVUC received the Youth Empowering and Supportive Congregation Award. The "YES" award was presented to us for our integration of youth in the life of the church through committee/leadership participation, youth worship, youth membership and significant youth participation at the district level. The award was accepted on our behalf by **Hannah Pocock** and **Katie Tyson**, who also took part in the Bridging Ceremony that day.

Special congratulations also go to **Katie Tyson** who won the district's Outstanding UU Youth Award which was also presented during this service. Proud parents **Karen and Herb Tyson** were on hand (along with **Janice Fitzpatrick, Rev. Steve Phinney, Ron Brandt** and **Rev. Lou**) to congratulate Katie on this special achievement.

## **Construction update (Ron Brandt)**

Now that plans to remodel the Meeting House were approved at the congregational meeting on February 26, you may be wondering what happens next. The Construction Task Force will continue to work with the architectural firm of Cole and Denny to refine plans and get the necessary permits from Fairfax County. At the appropriate time we will request bids and choose a contractor. At this point, our "application for an amendment to the special permit" has been accepted, and we expect to soon be notified by the County when a hearing will be held. As the process continues, we will keep the congregation informed. We expect construction to begin in late fall of 2007, about 18 months from now. If you have questions or comments, see **Bill Clontz, Ron Brandt**, or **Jim Potter**.

## **Caring Community (Betsy Stephens)**

We extend our sympathy to Elsa Porter, whose husband Hinckley died in Portland, OR, on April 1. The Porters were long-time members of MVUC.

Our good wishes continue for Betty Neuendorffer, Leila Goodman, Lois Shaw, Elaine Bronez, Bea Bobotek, and Larry Austin. Also for Phyllis Gonigam, recovering from an ankle sprained during a recent trip to Oregon.

## Upcoming Events, on and off the Hill

### April:

16, 11 am	Easter Egg Hunt	MVUC Grounds
22, 9am-2 pm	<i>Wheels to Africa Bike collection</i>	<i>Bush Hill Presbyterian Church</i>
22, 9:30 am	Introduction to Unitarian Universalism	Meeting House Commons
23, 12:30 pm	Earth Day Fair	MVUC Grounds
25, 10:30 am	Wisdom Years	Hollin Hall
29, 7 pm	Fort Hunt Pre-school Silent Auction	Carriage House
30, 1:30 pm	<i>Darfur Rally</i>	<i>National Mall</i>
30, 5 pm	Annual meeting Potluck (punch 5 pm, dinner 6 pm)	Meeting House
30, 6:30 pm	Annual Congregational Meeting	Meeting House

### May:

1, 7:30 pm	Hawaiian Luau Concert	Meeting House
2, 12:45 pm	Good Companions: Hollin Hall Senior Center Drama Group	Remington Chapel
6, 8 am	Fort Hunt Pre-school Rummage Sale	Carriage House
7, 9:30 am	Contemplative Workshop	Hollin Hall
7, 12:30 pm	History Forum: the Viet Nam War	Hollin Hall
7, 12:30 pm	Workenanny	MVUC Buildings and Grounds
12, 8:30 pm	Friday Nighters Dancing Club	Remington Chapel

## Good Companions

No meeting April 18

**11:45 to 12:45 - BYO lunch in Hollin Hall; May 2 program - 12:45 to 1:45 in Remington Chapel)**

May 2, 2006 - *The Scheme of the Driftless Shifter* by Carolyn Lane — a three act mixed-up melodrama.

Door knockings, door bells ringing, and clocks ticking at the wrong times. The piano player keeps interrupting the play at the wrong time with different tunes. The prompter is constantly reminding the players of their lines.

The play starts at the Pomington residence on a cold, chilly, snowy night. The maid really controls the goings-on while the master of the household believes he has the control.

Everything is mixed up in this hilarious melodrama presented by the **Hollin Hall Senior Center Drama Group**. The play will be performed in the Chapel from 12:45 to 1:45.

## MVUC Gardens (Wendy Burns)

Wow! Look at how beautiful our hill looks this spring!

For the second year, we are thrilled to have "professionals" (EP Landscaping who mow for us) doing some of the weeding, edging, and mulching of the Island Garden, front of the mansion, etc. For a number of years, volunteers had done all these jobs and we know how hard it has been.

But, there are still many areas that are maintained by volunteers. Please walk over to the side of the mansion to see the glorious garden tended by **Leroy Merrifield** and his family. It is especially gorgeous at this time of year when all the bulbs are in bloom. **Mary Barnett** and others keep the greenhouse area beautiful. **Russ and June Stumpe** lovingly maintain the garden in the meetinghouse patio. **Mike Walker** and **Sandy Rutiser** are committed to keeping the vines from overtaking the boxwood. The **Pourchot family** just took on the area behind/beside the mansion kitchen. Other members/friends try to keep up with other spots, too.

Many other sites are available and in need of volunteers to keep them from looking too overgrown. Please call **Wendy** if you like to be up on the hill and would be willing to take on an area. We have lots of "jobs" available. You can choose your own and do it on your own time!

## Briefly noted ...

Have you seen our missing dark green tablecloths? Three round ones and four rectangles have taken a walk from their cozy boxes in Hollin Hall, and we need them! Call **Karna Schwimmer** if you can help us find them.

A word of thanks to **Steve Dressing**, for painting the lines in the parking lot. What a difference it makes!

Volunteers are needed for cleanup after second service coffee hour. Please contact **Karna Schwimmer**.

The MVUC Greenhouse is now open for plant sales, Saturdays and Sundays 10 am - 2 pm, until Memorial Day, as well as random mornings during the week: call **Mary Barnett**.

**Happy Easter! (Remember, one service, 10:00 am)**

**Sunday Worship Themes:**

Apr. 16, 10 am only! *The Promise of New Possibilities*  
 Apr. 23 *Our Only Homeland*  
 Special Second Collection to benefit the UU Ministry for the Earth  
 Apr. 30 *Hospitality and Grace*  
 May 7 *Finding Fountain House*  
 May 14, 10 am only! *Mother's Day: A Celebration in Song*

**Services 9:30 and 11:15 am in the Remington Chapel**

Barbara Gay Stoddard and The Rev. Louis V. Schwebius  
 Marty Hayden  
 Rev. Robert Hardies  
 Rev. Louis V. Schwebius  
 Michael O'Brien and MVUC Choir

## Serving Our Congregation

**Board of Trustees**

Ric Sears, Chair '06	Joanne Masterson, Vice-chair '07
Doug MacCleery, Secretary '04	Wendy Burns, '08
Nance Cedar, '06	Hal Holtzclaw '07
Jane Nelson, '07	Jim Potter, '08
Raleigh Romine, '08	Katie Tyson '06

**Program Council**

	(Jane Nelson, Convener)
Sally Joy Remington, <i>Our Home Community</i>	Meg Clontz, <i>Worship</i>
Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, <i>Our Larger World</i>	Eric Pourchot, <i>Property</i>
Linda Walton, <i>Religious Education</i>	Ron Brandt, <i>Administration</i>

The Reverend Louis V. Schwebius, **Minister**

Barbara Gay Stoddard, **Interim Director of Religious Education**

Michael O'Brien, **Director of Music**

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*for more information on these and other activities, please check the bulletin boards*

## Sunday Service Survey (Laura Walker)

According to its charter, the MVUC Sunday Services Committee is charged, in partnership with the minister, with creating the program of Sunday morning worship services. The committee has prepared a survey, which is available as an insert in this newsletter; there will copies available at church, and it can also be accessed through the church's website. There are several ways to complete and return the survey. Completed surveys can be (a) mailed to MVUC, (b) hand-delivered to the church, or (c) emailed to [SunServMVUC@hotmail.com](mailto:SunServMVUC@hotmail.com).

All responses—whether signed or not—will be tabulated. You may send a response by email from your own account if you wish. However, an emailed response can be sent anonymously by the following process:

Go to [www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com); enter [anonsurvey@hotmail.com](mailto:anonsurvey@hotmail.com) for the email address; enter goodfeedback for the password; click on New Message and then click on the contact "Committee, Sunday Services" to automatically insert the committee's address into the "To" box (or type this in yourself); attach your completed survey and click send. Your survey will be received with only "anonsurvey" as its sending email address.

## Beyond the Hill

### Wheels to Africa

Help us help the world — one bike at a time! On April 22, Bikes for the World will be collecting used bicycles, which will be reconditioned and sent to Africa, Asia, or other needy parts of the world where people spend many hours walking to obtain water, medical care, etc. Bikes will be collected at Bush Hill Presbyterian Church, 4916 Franconia Road, between 9 am and 2 pm. A \$10 donation is requested to help pay for shipping.

### Rally to stop genocide

SAVE DARFUR: Join UUSC at the Rally to Stop Genocide, April 30, 2006 (Program 2-4 p.m., Assemble 1:30-2 p.m.), Washington, D.C. National Mall, between 3rd and 4th Streets in front of the U.S. Capitol (Metro Station — Federal Center SW on the Orange and Blue subway lines). UUSC is a member of the Save Darfur Coalition. Complete the Save Darfur postcard at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org). The cards will be delivered to the President and Congress. Let us know if you will attend the rally by RSVP at [savedarfur@uusc.org](mailto:savedarfur@uusc.org) or contact Claire DeWitte at 800-388-3920, ext. 378. For more information visit <http://www.uusc.org/darfur/rally.html>. Have your voice heard at the Congressional Lobby Days on April 28 and May 1! To register and learn more, visit <http://savedarfur.org/rally/lobbydays>.

Looking for MVUC rally coordinator (rides to Metro, etc.) — call Janice Fitzpatrick.