



Stirrings From Windmill Hill

News and Notes from Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

December 16, 2005

1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria, Virginia 22307
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Editor: Mimi Stevens (newsletters@mvuc.org)

The Board in brief (Doug MacCleery)

At our regular meeting on December 6th, the Board heard a report from the Green Sanctuary Committee about efforts to obtain grant money to assist in installing a "green roof" on the flat-roofed sections of the Meeting House construction project.

The Board also reviewed a formal legal analysis of the issues and possible risks to MVUC associated with continued operation of Fort Hunt Preschool (FHP) during construction activities. The legal report contained a number of recommendations to mitigate and address risks, including negotiating a lease with FHP that contains particular stipulations. The BOT adopted a resolution directing that FHP be notified that it can continue operation during construction, subject to adoption of a lease agreement that incorporates the recommendation of the council report. The details of preparing and negotiating the lease agreement will be the responsibility of the MVUC/FHP Relations Committee with continued involvement of council.

The Board heard and discussed reports from the Minister, Business Administrator and Treasurer.

For details, see the minutes, which will be posted in the Commons and on our website after approval at our next Board meeting.

From the Treasurer ... (Al Erickson)

The November 30, 2005, financial report shows:	November	Fiscal Year to date	Budgeted
INCOME	\$26,063	\$144,450	\$483,810
EXPENSES	\$30,404	\$182,733	\$483,810

Reminder! The 2005 tax year is ending, so if you want to claim your church contribution as a deduction you need to get it in on or before December 31. Thanks for your support!

Are you up-to-date on the amount you pledged to be paid this year in the Capital Campaign? If not, now's the time to earn a tax deduction by contributing to the Building Fund.

RE activities (Barbara Gay Stoddard)

Check out the flyer for more information on how **YOU** can help with the **ABC Quilt** project in Jan. & Feb. You can donate material, help lead a class or help the kids **deliver love and comfort** with handmade quilts to children who are abandoned, HIV-positive, or alcohol or drug affected. Also, check out the flyer to see what is happening in Adult RE in January and February. Come join us in the fun and joy of working and playing together in community.

Sunday Morning Happenings

3 & 4 year olds

Dec. 18: No Class, ONE SERVICE 10:00 AM. Winter Pageant

Dec. 25: No Class, ONE SERVICE 10:00 AM. Hanukkah and Christmas Service. Younger children can join their friends in the Nursery after Time for All Ages

Jan. 1: No Class, ONE SERVICE 10:00 AM. Younger children can join their friends in the Nursery after Time for All Ages

Jan. 8: Class meets Again: Differences Are Interesting; **Jan. 15: Class:** Both Girls and Boys Can

K, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Grade, 4th, 5th Grades, Jr. Youth (6- 8 Grades) & Sr. Youth (9-12 Grades)

Dec. 18: No Class, ONE SERVICE 10:00 AM. Winter Pageant

Dec. 25: No Class, ONE SERVICE 10:00 AM. Hanukkah and Christmas Service. Kindergarten and Up are asked to remain in service

Jan. 1: No Class, ONE SERVICE 10:00 AM. Kindergarten through 5th Grade are invited to a New Year's Celebration with Barbara following "Time for All Ages." 6th Grade and up are invited to stay in service

Jan. 8: K-8th Meet in Carriage House. ABC Quilt Project. Sr. Youth meet in YRUU Room

Jan. 15: K-8th Meet in Carriage House. ABC Quilt Project. Sr. Youth meet in YRUU Room.

Sunday Afternoons

OWL – (Grades 10 – 12) Classes: Jan. 8 & 22 (4:00-6:30 pm – YRUU Room)

COA – Class (8th & 9th graders) Classes: Jan. 8 & 15 (4:00 – 6:00 pm – Hollin Hall)

Special Events

Pageant Rehearsal, etc.: Saturday, Dec. 17, 10am – 2pm. Chapel

Pageant: Sunday, Dec. 18, 10:00 am. Chapel. All participants gather in Chapel at 9:30 am

Christmas Eve Jr. Choir Rehearsal: Saturday, Dec. 24 at 5:00 pm.

Jan. 1 & Jan. 8: Return Guest at Your Table boxes to RE table in the Commons.

Adult RE Happenings in December

Movie Night, Fri. Dec. 16: Affluenza (1997) Show starts at 7:30 pm in the Commons. Plan to stay for discussion following. Feel free to bring your own snacks

Monday, Dec. 5: Energy Discussion Group, led by **Jay Holmes**, 7:30-9:30 pm, Commons

Special Evening Services in December

On **Wednesday, December 21st** at 7:00 PM, **Nance Cedar, Barbara Gay Stoddard, and Rev. Lou** will lead a celebration of the Winter Solstice. All are invited to come and participate in this service, which honors the darkness and the light of the season.

There will be two services on **Christmas Eve**. Anyone interested in having their child dedicated at the 5:30 pm Family Service on Saturday, December 24, should speak to **Barbara Gay Stoddard**, our Interim DRE, as soon as possible.

Finally, rounding out the year, on **Saturday, December 31st** at 5:30 pm, **Rev. Lou** will lead a special New Year's Eve Vespers Service. All are invited to come to the Chapel and share in a time of readings, music, and meditation.

Guest at Your Table

GUEST AT YOUR TABLE BOXES are in the Commons, waiting for you to pick one up. Put a Guest at Your Table box on your family's table and discuss together what it means to welcome a guest to your table. For more information visit the website at <http://www.uusc.org/ia/gayt/index.html>

Fill the boxes with your loose change and return to MVUC on Jan. 1 or Jan. 8. You can return the change or a check made out to UUSC with GAYT in memo line. We'll send one check (for all the change we collect) along with your checks to the UU Service Committee. Through this special tradition, Unitarian Universalist communities celebrate the worth and dignity of all people and learn how to put these values into action.

Partner Church Brunch January 1 (Lisa Gillispie)

Ring in the new year while enjoying good food and company to benefit MVUC's Partner Church in Szentháromság, Romania, on January 1 in Hollin Hall after the service. Enjoy scrambled eggs, potatoes, sausage, pastries and fruit, \$12, children under 5, \$6.

Open meetings scheduled re: Fort Hunt Preschool (Ron Brandt)

A committee appointed by the Board of Trustees to clarify relations between MVUC and the Fort Hunt Preschool will hold open meetings on Sunday, **January 8**, after both services and Thursday, **January 12** at 7:30 pm. Child care will be available to those who request it in advance. Interested members of the congregation are invited to comment on a draft report the committee is currently preparing. After these hearings, committee members will prepare a final draft to be presented to the Board in February. Committee members have been gathering information about such matters as 1) effects of FHP's use of the Carriage House on the MVUC religious education program, 2) the amount of the rental fee charged to FHP, and 3) intangible benefits and liabilities to MVUC from presence of FHP.

At the December Board meeting, the Board approved the committee's short-term recommendation to request a local attorney, Scott Surovell, to draft a proposed lease agreement. On condition that both parties can reach agreement on provisions of the new lease, the Board voted unanimously to allow FHP to continue operation during the expected construction period.

The Committee welcomes input from as many people as possible. If you would like to give your opinion to the committee in writing, see **Wendy Burns**, chair, or any member: **Gioia Chilton** (FHP liaison), **Jeff Gauger**, **Joanne Masterson**, **Bill Clontz**, **Donna Bledsoe** (staff liaison), and **Ron Brandt**.

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice Katrina Relief Effort

Please view the report on the UUSJ web site, www.uusj.org, under the "Katrina Relief" block. You will find the latest information about the large and generous response of the member congregations of UUSJ (including MVUC) to the Katrina disaster.

Upcoming Events, on and off the Hill

December:

18, 1, 2 & 4 pm	Green Sanctuary: Solar House tours & film screening	Arlington
18, 3 pm	Tom Teasley & friends: Concert for BEL Center	Remington Chapel
21, 7 pm	Winter Solstice celebration	Remington Chapel
24, 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm	Christmas Eve Services	Remington Chapel
31, 5:30 pm	New Year's Eve Vespers	Remington Chapel
31, 6-9 pm	Labyrinth Walk	Cedar Lane UU Church

January:

1, after service	Partner Church Brunch	Hollin Hall
3, 11:45 am	Good Companions: Jay Holmes	Hollin Hall
8, after both services	Open Meeting on Fort Hunt Pre-School	Remington Chapel
12, 7:30 pm	Open Meeting on Fort Hunt Pre-School	Meeting House Commons
13, 8:30 pm	Friday Nighters Dancing Club	Remington Chapel
14, 8:30 am	Green Sanctuary gathering	UU Church of Fairfax
14, 9:30 am	UCM "Souper" Saturday	Torpedo Factory & Scoop Grill, Alexandria
14, 9:30 am	UU Legislative Ministry of Virginia	First UU Church of Richmond
15, 3 pm	Linda Buttery Memorial Service	Remington Chapel

Good Companions

11:45 to 12:45 - BYO lunch; program - 12:45 to 1:45 in Hollin Hall

January 3: **Jay Holmes** - "A checkered career in WWII"

Jay tells of his 6 years in the military. When he was drafted in his junior year in college he was sent around the US teaching "blind flying". Later, when the army realized he could speak German, he was made a part of the Counter Intelligence Force Corps. He was in Paris V-E Day and crossed the Rhein in time to arrest a lot of Nazis. His duty continued later as a civilian. Finally, he got home to finish college ... and meet his wife-to-be, Beatrice.

Susan B. Anthony funding requests due Jan. 28 (Joan Wamsley)

The Susan B. Anthony Committee is accepting requests for funding. The money comes from the profits from Holiday Shop. Committees, groups, staff, or individuals may submit written detailed requests (how much it costs, where it can be purchased, where it will be used, where it will be kept, etc.) by January 28. Requests should be put in the Every Thursday/Women's Group mail box. Some examples of previously funded items are: a snow blower, lighting in the Fireplace room of Hollin Hall, windows in the nursery doors, and half-wide tables for the quilters and the book sale. The committee is made up of three members of Every Thursday, and one representative from each of the following committees: finance, buildings, grounds, and religious education. The committee will make recommendations to the Board of Trustees on the disbursement of funds. The Board has the final authority on the use of the money. There will be approximately \$10,000.

End-of-year donations (John Henrehan)

Here's a friendly reminder from your MVUC Endowment Committee: the calendar year is coming to an end. To extract maximum tax advantages from your charitable donations, consider writing those checks now. Contributions – large and small – to the Endowment Fund would be most gratefully accepted. (Just write "endowment fund" on the memo line.)

Thanks to generous bequests, gifts in memory of others, the occasional surprise check, and a recovering stock market, our Endowment Fund is growing. Someday it will be large enough to provide a reliable source of income for the preservation of our precious buildings and grounds. Care to contribute to the fund that will give forever?

If anyone has appreciated stock or mutual fund shares that they wish to contribute please remember that, to avoid the capital gains tax, you must transfer the shares to the church brokerage account. Contact **Donna Bledsoe** for the proper procedure.

Caring Community (Betsy Stephens)

Condolences to **Suzanne McDonnell**, whose mother, Helen Leah Radl, died recently in California after a long illness.

Our caring thoughts are with **Jes Foster**, now residing in Sunrise Assisted Living.

We send sympathy to the family of **Pat Buttery**, whose daughter, **Linda**, died November 21. A memorial service will be held in the Chapel at 3 pm on January 15.

50th Anniversary - Festival of the Arts (June Stumpe)

Help celebrate our own Arts, Artists, Music and Poetry on Feb. 5th, 2006. Have you ever written a poem? Have you ever thought about writing a poem? We would like to encourage you to write a poem or verse, any subject, any style, (preferably not more than sixteen lines.) At the Festival there will be poetry readings for kids who are under age 14 and as well as for adults, even a few prizes! This is a wonderful opportunity for everyone, members and friends, adults, and children, so start thinking and start writing. Deadline for entering your poem is January 22nd, 2006. Any questions call **June**.

2005 Holiday Shop Country Kitchen (Ruth MacCleery)

The 2005 MVUC Holiday Shop Country Kitchen was supported by many members of the church community. We greatly appreciate all the delicious baked donations that were brought in. The tremendous amount of chutneys, sauces, fudge, boursin cheese, gingerbread houses, peanut brittle, and bean soup, as well as some other individual treats made by the Every Thursday Women's Group were the favorites many returning shoppers came to buy.

The displays were augmented by the lovely fresh fruit decorations on the mantel and the table that were made by **Meg Clontz**. **Dorothy Brandt** did a great job as greeter and hostess, and **Doreen Bender** helped tremendously with set up on Friday, and pricing items as they came in on both days.

There were so many others that contributed their time and/or cooking talents. I hope I have not missed anyone that helped make the Country Kitchen such a success: **Ginny Endicott, Hal Holtzclaw, Isa McGuire, Darbi Bossman, Baiba Seefer, Peg Bartel, Judy Lohmann, Lew Long, Sandy Peterson, Betsy Tower, Renee Griest, Tamara de la Camp, Maida Heather, Wendy Burns, Ralph Slawson, Nancy Pickering, Cheryl Sabo, Sally Joy Remington, Barbara Al-Turki, Beth Conway, Nancy Pickering, Trish Waters, June Stumpe, Jeannine Jeffrey, Bea Holmes, Pam Tinker, Pat Kenny-Priest, Kay Youngflesh, Ginny Hastings, Kris Rosenthal, Lisa Gillispie, Deborah Berger, Mimi Stevens, Curtis Hunter, David and Lisa Napier, Renee Desrosiers, Lois Shaw, Sherry DeVries, Liz Campbell, Bea Bobotek, Sonja Bloom, Annie Mechanic, Deborah Hansell, Marge Witting, Josh Carr, Eleanor Erickson, Paula Dillard, Carolyn Slenska, Karen Dornseif, Pat Jackson, Karna Schwimmer, Dotty Ann McClelland, Pat Krogh, Elizabeth Peebles, Vilma Morrissey, Joan Wamsley, Janice Fitzpatrick, Kathi McNeil, Jo Jackley, and Donna Bledsoe. Thank you to all of you!**

Construction update (Ron Brandt)

Members of the Construction Task Force met December 13 with the Board of Trustees to report status of plans for the proposed renovation and remodeling of the Meeting House. Cost estimates prepared by staff members of Cole & Denny, the architects, are higher than expected, so the Board needs to decide how to proceed. One option is to go ahead with construction, but to delay completion of part of the new addition until the needed funding becomes available.

Task Force members have asked the Board to call a congregational meeting in February. If such a meeting is approved at the January Board meeting, Task Force members will present informal briefings in late January to explain the situation and invite expressions of opinion.

Members of the Construction Task Force include **Heather Harts'horn, Steve Dressing, Eric Pourchot, Rob Dickinson, and Karen Tyson**. Staff liaison is **Donna Bledsoe**. Executive Committee: **Ron Brandt, Bill Clontz, and Robin Roberts**.

UUs can influence legislation in Virginia

The 2006 Virginia General Assembly will soon be here and with it, our opportunity to influence Virginia's legislation, budgets, policies and regulations. Similar efforts exist in our neighbor Maryland, as well as in California.

It's been a few years since anyone has tried to organize a statewide legislative coalition of UUs — we're organizing again with the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Virginia (UULM-VA). The mission of the UULM-VA is to provide a consistent and coherent voice for UU principles and traditions in the Virginia General Assembly decision-making process. And we will facilitate effective witness on priority issues in coordination with other progressive churches and faith-based groups, including the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy.)

Plan to attend the UULM-VA meeting on Saturday, **January 14**, at the First UU Church of Richmond, between 9:30 and 3:00 p.m. For additional information contact Laura Dely at Ldely@yahoo.com or check out the UUSJ web site at www.uusj.org.

Another way to influence legislation, closer to home (Ron Brandt)

Virginia UUs working for social justice can also help influence state legislation through the Virginia Interfaith Center. Unitarian Universalism has not previously been considered one of the Center's 21 Christian, Jewish, and Islamic "faith groups," but that may be changing. Nine of the 38 people attending a Northern Virginia legislative briefing on December 4 were UUs, including **Steve Phinney, Jack Hinman, and Ron Brandt** from MVUC. The Center's 2006 legislative priorities include strengthening responsible lending laws, raising the minimum wage, and strengthening the indigent defense system. To find out about the Center, visit the website: www.VirginiaInterfaithCenter.org.

Solar Home tour and film screening in Arlington

On Sunday, December 18th, Scott Sklar has graciously consented to open his home to a Solar Home Tour and Global Warming film. We will be showing the 30 minute film, "We Are All Smith Islanders", produced by the Chesapeake Climate Action Network, and hearing about the efforts of CCAN and other organizations to educate the public about the Renewable Portfolio Standards legislation in Virginia. The film/discussion will be held at 1:00, 2:30 and 4:00 with solar home tours before and after each showing. When you get to Scott's house, walk to back of driveway of 706 North Ivy Street to The Stella Group, Ltd. office building. We will have 25 chairs set up for film viewers. Address: 706 North Ivy Street, Arlington, VA 22201 Phone: 703-522-3049 Info from diana@chesapeakeclimate.org

Around the UUA

Baltimore Washington Growth Committee: Working for You!

The Baltimore Washington Growth Committee (BWGC) is a nine-person committee of laypeople and religious professionals with the charge of growing Unitarian Universalism in the region. We are moving forward with our plan for growth, put together over two years and with input from congregations across the region. One of the first steps is to create subcommittees that are responsible for specific portions of the plan. We are delighted to present to you those subcommittees, many of which are already co-chaired by the dedicated leaders listed below:

Vital Congregations	Mike Harris, Cedar Lane; Rev. Jaco ten Hove, Co-Minister, Paint Branch
Public Outreach	Joyce Dowling, Davies Memorial; Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd, Minister, Bull Run
Diversity	Rev. John Crestwell, Co-Minister, Davies Memorial; Paula Cole Jones, All Souls
New Large Cong.	Rev. Roger Fritts, Minister, Cedar Lane
Revival	
Fundraising	

The six subcommittees listed above are all looking for members with a passion for Unitarian Universalism and a desire to foster its growth in the Baltimore Washington region. If you are interested in serving on any of the subcommittees, please contact JPD staff member Bob Johnsen at bob.johnsen@verizon.net.

You will see that one of the subcommittees is called "Revival"—that's an honest-to-goodness Unitarian Universalist revival! We are planning this momentous event for the afternoon of Sunday, April 2, following the JPD Annual Conference at the Doubletree Hotel in Crystal City, VA. on Friday night and Saturday. Please mark that date on your calendars, and expect inspiring preaching, astounding music, and the chance to see the flame of Unitarian Universalism shining brightly.

As always, the members of the BWGC welcome your comments and questions as we move forward with this exciting plan for growth. We are:

Ron Brandt, Mount Vernon, ronbrandt@cox.net
 Augustin Douoguih, Sterling, adouoguih@msn.com
 John Gubbings, Cedar Lane, jgubbings@verizon.net
 Aynsley Hamel, Towson, ahamel13@msn.com
 Deborah Kahn, Director of Religious Education, Rockville, dkahn@uucr.org
 Amanda Poppei, Ministerial Intern, River Road, apoppei@rruc.org
 Evelyn Spurgin, Annapolis, mes@hbdlaw.com (Co-chair)
 Rev. Bill Welch, Minister for Programs, Fairfax, bwelch@uucf.org (Co-chair)
 Chuck Wooldridge, All Souls, cwool@verizon.net

We look forward to updating you on the subcommittees' progress over the coming months, and we'll see you all on April 2!

Phoenix in March: Midsize Congregation conference

Congregational change is personal: meeting people where they are and moving on. Today's mid-size congregations (with 151 to 550 members) deal with the complexities of change in their organizations. Supporting mission, cultivating growth, and nurturing aspirations are essential to smooth transitions and to attracting and retaining members.

Join us for a dynamic program focused on these and more issues important to congregational leaders in Phoenix AZ, March 2-5, 2006, for the **6th National Conference for Midsize Congregations**. Hear Keynote Speaker, William Bridges, PhD, and participate in speaker-led exercises, workshops, daily worship, congregational team activities, small group opportunities, and social gatherings. The full conference brochure can be found at the conference webpage. Register online by January 31, 2006. For more information go to <http://www.uua.org/cde/midsize2006/>

Sunday Worship Themes:	One service at 10:00 am Dec 18 & 25 and Jan 1; resume 9:30 and 11:15 am Jan 8
Dec. 18	<i>The Big Orange Splot (Holiday Pageant)</i> Children and Youth of MVUC
Dec. 25	<i>A Celebration of Christmas and Hanukkah</i> Rev. Louis V. Schwebius and Barbara Gay Stoddard
Jan. 1	<i>The Pursuit of Happiness</i> Rev. Louis V. Schwebius
Jan. 8	<i>In the Beginning was the Speech</i> Rev. Dr. Ted Spencer
Jan. 15	<i>Realizing the Vision</i> Rev. Louis V. Schwebius

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

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**

Mt. Vernon

Unitarian Church

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Beyond the Hill ...

Walk the labyrinth at Cedar Lane on December 31

Celebrate the turning of the year with meditation, prayer and music. Saturday, December 31, 2005, 6-9 pm. at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, 9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, MD. No preregistration needed. A single walk takes about 30 minutes, and the last walking starts at 8:30 pm. Please wear socks to walk on our indoor canvas labyrinth. No charge, but donations welcome. For more information, contact Chris Mauro 703-847-5820 or christopher.mauro@it.baesystems.com or Cedar Lane UU Church 301-494-8300 or www.cedarlane.org

Green Sanctuary meeting at Fairfax UU on January 14

On Saturday, January 14th, 2006 from 8:30 to 3:30, join the gathering of Green Sanctuary Groups and friends at UUCF in Oakton, VA.. Keynoting will be Rabbi Daniel Swartz, director of the Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light. Exchange ideas in breakout discussions about simple living, environmental justice, the threat of global warming and how to build greener congregations and communities. Share in a joyful earth meditation involving poetry, voices of nature and the percussive magic of performance artist Mike Wingo. Tour UUCF's 11 acres of wildlife habitat. Bring a vegetarian appetizer, main course or dessert and your own place setting. Car pooling is encouraged. RSVP to Green Sanctuary Gathering at uucf@uucf.org or call at 703-281-4230.

One more way to benefit UCM: "SOUPer" Saturday, January 14

The potters of the Torpedo Factory, together with The Scoop Grill will sponsor the 12th annual "SOUPer" Saturday on January 14, 2005, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., in Old Towne Alexandria. The cost of \$15 includes a beautiful handmade bowl and a free ticket for one serving of soup. Tickets can only be redeemed on the day of the event, January 14 at The Scoop Grill – at 110 King Street, half a block from the Torpedo Factory.

Hear the roar! Feel the mist! See the mighty Falls! July 16-29, 2006

Come experience the wonder of Niagara Falls including some great educational opportunities while being taken care of like royalty. The UU Church of Niagara is conducting a four-day UU Niagara Experience which is a lifetime opportunity to encounter the Falls up close from every perspective, even safely riding beneath a tethered balloon. Spend four days with us exploring the rich historical and natural wonders around the Falls. For information visit our web site : <http://www.uunex.net/> Email : info@uunex.net Telephone : (716) 791-4453.