



SOCIAL ACTION MATTERS

*A publication of the Social Action Council
Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley*

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March 2008



Some of the girls who attend 6th–8th grades in Molumbo in front of their rundown Lar. (Sep 08)

The 2008 Bursary Program Extends it's Reach Priscilla Laws and Terri Smiley

Sometime in early January we exceeded our \$20,000 goal needed to support 98 girls. We owe thanks to almost 100 contributors. Over half (58%) of our donors were UUCV congregants. The other donors were friends of UUCV members. Major items in the Bursary budget include school and residence fees, uniforms, transportation (at vacation times), school books and supplies, and even “hygiene” supplies.

Many of the oldest girls we have been supporting in the past few years are from Molumbo, a relatively large but remote village. Molumbo now has 6th, 7th and 8th grade classes. We decided to combine \$2000 of our extra bursary funds with \$3500 of supplemental funds raised by the Londonderry School in Harrisburg. So parents living on farms in remote villages near Molumbo now have an additional \$5500 to obtain the building materials needed to repair and expand the capacity of the Molumbo residence.

This renovation will enable 13 more girls from smaller villages in the region who have finished fifth grade to live in Molumbo while attending upper primary grades. Thus, thanks to many of you, we are providing partial support for 13 more girls



The new Dickinson College organic farm in Boiling Springs, PA.

Caring for the Earth: A six session RE Series for both Adults and Children

Priscilla Laws

Priscilla Laws will lead a series of six sessions from March 16th through April 20th centered on the 7th Principle of Unitarian Universalism: “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” Although valuing the web of existence is a spiritual obligation, the wisdom needed to care for the Earth effectively requires an understanding of science. These sessions will begin with students

Caring for the Earth (Cont): taking a web quiz to gauge their Ecological Footprints. They will then participate in a series of field trips and hands-on experiments designed to help them learn about personal lifestyle changes to reduce their footprints. These activities include making measurements on carbon dioxide emission and absorption by plants and animals and doing water quality measurements. In addition, there will be two field trips – one to Dickinson College’s Center for Sustainability and another to the College’s Organic farm.



Photo: On Sun Mar 30th you can tour Dickinson’s Center for Sustainable living featuring grey water use, solar energy capture, low flow toilets and more.

There will be two exciting field trips during the Services: one to Dickinson College’s Center for Sustainable Living (March 30th) and the other to its new Organic Farm in Boiling Springs (April 13th). The series will end with a give and take session on how each of us can “Care for the Earth” by reducing our environmental footprint.

| SCHEDULE | |
|----------|---|
| March 16 | Estimating Your Ecological Foot Print |
| March 23 | Global Warming and CO2 Measurements |
| March 30 | Field Trip to the Dickinson College Center for Sustainable Living |
| April 6 | Water Quality and Dickinson’s ALLARM Project |
| April 13 | Field Trip to the Dickinson College Farm |
| April 20 | Wrap Up Session: Reducing Our Footprints? |

NOTE: Parents and other adults who are willing to drive fellow adults and children to the field trips on March 30th and April 13th and also help with keeping an eye on the children should call P. Laws at 243-9525 (H), 245-1242 (O) or send her an email: lawsp@dickinson.edu.

ZAP: UUCV Co-Sponsoring an African Art Show on April 11
Priscilla Laws

As part of my work on UUCV’s Mozambique Bursary Project, I met Richard Adams -- a recently retired sociologist and fellow UU from Portland Oregon. Dick now heads up a project that imports absolutely gorgeous Women’s art from the Weya region in Zimbabwe.



Examples of Appliqués made by Weya Women

These Zimbabwe Art Project (alias ZAP) pieces include board painting, appliqué, embroidery, and fabric painting in addition to T-shirts and jigsaw puzzles.

Example of Appliqués made by Weya Women

The project is described in more detail at

<http://www.zimbabweartistsproject.org/>

Dickinson College and the UUCV Social Action Council are co-sponsoring a public talk by Dick followed by a reception, art exhibit and sale of items at the College’s Depot. The event will be held in the Depot on Friday evening April 11th.

In addition, Dick has offered to lead an adult RE session at UUCV on Sunday April 13th on the topics such as women and art in male-dominant culture and how to think about Africa in ways that promote hope rather than despair.



Ceresencia Chibaya painting

GLBT Justice Initiative (GJI) Update

Alan Franklin

GLBT Justice Initiative Update:

The Initiative has a number of balls in the air at this time. We are still working, albeit behind the scenes, to bring about the adoption by the Carlisle Borough Council of a local Human Relations Ordinance including sexual orientation and gender identity and expression among the covered categories. In cooperation with the UU Penna. Legislative Advocacy Network (UUPLAN) we are working for adoption by the State legislature of House Bill 1400 and Senate Bill 761, amending the State Human Relations Act (HRA) to add sexual orientation, etc., to the list of the covered categories. At the same time, a bill (SB1250) has been introduced in the Senate to revive the attempt to amend the State Constitution to restrict legal benefits to man-woman married couples only, and we are taking action to oppose it. As part of our attempts to change the social atmosphere of the society around us we are trying to bring to the Carlisle Theater the film "For the Bible Tells Me So" and are writing editorials and letters to the editor of local newspapers. And it is time again to invite members of the congregation to participate in the Silent Witness program.

The local Human Relations Ordinance was taken up last year by the Carlisle Mayor's Inclusive Cities Initiative (ICI) and assigned to one of that Initiative's subcommittees, on sexual orientation. It was reported favorably by that subcommittee to

the Task Force, the central ICI working group. On Jan. 29 2008 the Task Force reported it out favorably as one of its recommendations for action, to the Mayor. Reasonable consideration appears to be given to the Ordinance, and we will pause a while and let the process work. In the meantime a small group of us, Duane Fickeisen, John Kallmann, and myself for UUCV and Larry Rankin, retired physician from St. John's Episcopal Church in Carlisle, had a conversation with representatives of the Dickinson College administration to explore support from Dickinson College for the Ordinance. We await the results of that conversation.

UUPLAN is a network open to all UU churches in the State, for the purpose of working together to get legislation favorable to our UU policies through the Penna. legislature. The first two issues to be tackled by UUPLAN were chosen to be in the areas of GLBT rights and treatment, and in improvement of the voting procedures in the State. Supporters of GLBT concerns have introduced the two bills (HB1400 and SB761) mentioned in the first paragraph above, and UUPLAN organized a lobby day in Harrisburg to urge adoption of these bills. We took several actions. The same small group, augmented by Kevin Wagner, program chair of social studies at the Carlisle High School and member of the Church of God, visited the State Representative, Will Gabig, and State Senator, Pat Vance, who represent the overwhelming majority of UUCV members. Conversation with Gabig about gay rights, etc., was completely futile; the conversation with Vance, on the other hand, was cordial and friendly, and we were almost on the same page. Vance will sign the Senate bill when and if it comes to the floor, but will not cosponsor it.. She will also explore with Sen. Stewart Greenleaf, Chair of the Judiciary Committee, and with Sen. Pat Browne, lead sponsor of the bill, what needs to be done to get it out of committee and onto the senate floor for a vote. We circulated a petition in the congregation, supporting the bills and asking for the lawmakers' support. More than 30 signatures were gathered. Copies of the petition were dropped off by Tom DeWall on the UUPLAN lobby day at the offices of every Representative and Senator who represents a UUCV member.

GLBT Justice Initiative (GJI) Update (Cont):

We also circulated a petition asking for opposition to Senate Bill 1250, the revival of the "Marriage Protection Act", to amend the Penna. Constitution to restrict legal benefits to man-woman married couples only. This petition garnered 70 signatures, having been circulated in a more direct manner (using a sandwich board and carrying the petition around the Social Hall on several Sundays) than the preceding one. Eleven copies of this one were made, mailing it to the 7 Representatives and 4 Senators representing most of UUCV's. As I write, SB1250 is due for a committee hearing and a committee vote early in the week of March 17, 2008. Efforts will be made to assist congregation members who are so inclined to write letters or call to their Senators, opposing SB1250.

The film "For the Bible Tells Me So" is a moving and informative story of the way Biblical quotations are being used selectively and out of context by opponents of gay rights, and also of the trauma families undergo as their gay and lesbian children come out to them, and the various way the families handle that trauma. About three weeks ago, we took a description of the film, pictures of the crowd who attended it for three showings in the York Strand Theater, and glowing reviews by professional film reviewers to the Carlisle Theater with the request they consider showing it here. We were promised it would be put before the selection committee and we would be notified of the outcome. Nothing has been heard from them so far, and we will recontact them to find out what has happened.

We also have had a letter to the editor in support of bills HB1400 and SB761 published in the Sentinel for Jan. 31, 2008, and an editorial opposing using the Constitution to discriminate against any group published in the Patriot-News for Feb. 24, 2008.

March 2008's Change for the World recipient is The Silent Witnesses of Central PA. They are an organization of gay and straight allies dedicated to helping the GLBT community have safe and

peaceful events, such as Pridefests, the showing of films, or staging of plays. They provide a non-confrontational, non-violent buffer between the GLBT folk and their oppressors. Their aim is to defuse potential confrontations between protesters and event participants. They help keep the peace and at the same time provide open, public support for those in our society whose worth and

dignity is under attack. UUCV has made a large contribution to the Silent Witnesses, right from their inception. It is time again to call for volunteers; there are now on the Welcoming Congregation table two sign-up sheets, one for new volunteers and the other for those already part of the Witnesses. We need to create a roster of everybody involved, to aid in passing along word when a call is sent out to have volunteers at an up-coming event, and we need to plan a training session for new volunteers.

Alan Franklin

Holocaust Memorial Service: Thursday, May 1, 2008 -- An annual Carlisle Area Religious Council commemoration, cosponsored by Congregation Beth Tikvan and Dickinson College. Time, location and additional information will be available soon.

Effective January 2008, UUCV will be publishing Correctional Justice Matters, a new quarterly newsletter focusing on the congregation's Correctional Justice Initiative. It will be available on the SAC page on the UUCV website or on the SAC Table in the Social Hall.

**Olive Branch Interfaith Peace Partnership
Calls for End to War in Iraq**

Jon Tarrant

On Friday March 7 five UUCV members joined a bus of UCH members on a trip to Washington DC for a day of peace activism.

Rev. Bill Sinkford, head of the UUA, addressed a service at the historic All Souls UU Church. Then the group joined several hundred members from a wide variety of religious denominations for music and inspirational speeches dampened only slightly by a constant rain. Following this rally, forty of the leaders proceeded to the Hart Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill where they participated in a non-violent act of civil disobedience and were arrested. Unfortunately, this event received little media attention, but the participants were energized and remain committed to the cause of peace,

Whoops, it finally is happening!

Alan Franklin

As most of us know, Pastor Fred Phelps and his Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka , KS, have made it an

obnoxious habit of protesting gay and lesbian doings around the country by picketing these events, going so far as to picket the funerals of soldiers killed in the line of duty in Iraq. Finally, somebody is striking, or at least picketing, back.

A gentleman named Chris Love of Leavenworth, KS, got the idea and floated the idea of counterpicketing Westboro on several websites. It worked beyond his dreams and as a result some 400 - 500 people are planning to turn out for a Million Fag March at the Westboro church on March 30. The word "fag" is used here in counterpoint to Phelps website, www.godhatesfags.com. Go, Chris!

UU PEACEMAKERS

Jon Tarrant

Our congregation has been invited to join over 120 UU congregations nationwide to participate in peace activities.

We would benefit from newsletters, program ideas, resources and curriculum and this would give our congregation a voice in writing and approving the UUA Peacemaking Statement of Conscience.

Social Action Committee is seeking an individual willing to be the point of contact and local leader of this incentive. Could this be you? Contact Pricilla Laws or Jon Tarrant if interested

Please forward this message to your minister and Social Justice chairperson or a GA enthusiast.



Is your congregation a **Peacemaking Congregation**? Over 120 UU congregations nationwide are. They are sponsoring workshops, lectures and book clubs exploring peaceful **alternatives to violence** on the personal, societal and international levels, as part of the national Congregational Study/Action Issue on Peacemaking (2006-2010).

Ministers: We invite you to share your best Peacemaking sermons on our Peacemaking Website (under construction) email john@schaibly.com for details.

How do you become a PARTICIPATING CONGREGATION?

Identify an individual to be your point of contact and hold at least one peacemaking activity. Have them **reply to this email** with the word "Participate" in the **Subject Line**.

Help Spread the Peace



SAC Members

Kathy Bell

Julie Ham

Alan Franklin

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Next months articles due 4/12/2008