



SOCIAL ACTION MATTERS

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Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley
Third Quarter 2009*



Beatrice, our Molumbo Lar housemother, presents a live chicken to Priscilla

Bursary Project News

By Priscilla Laws

For the past 5 years, members and friends of UUCV have been the primary supporters of a “bursary” project that enables girls, ages 11 through 20, in Mozambique’s rural Province of Zambézia, to attend upper school grades. Karen Butt initiated the Bursary Project and she continues to manage it with the support of the United Church of Canada. Karen works with staff members in the Quelimane office of the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM).

To be eligible for our UUCV bursary program, a girl must have been an active member of one of the many village educational AIDS prevention clubs, known as PEDRA. Karen Butt’s work helped establish these clubs with funding from Church World Service (CWF). CCM also manages the PEDRA program. The success of our UUCV Bursary Program depends critically on the fact that each girl who is active in her PEDRA club has proven herself reliable and excited about the opportunity to stay in school.

UUCV representatives conduct on-site Bursary Project reviews every two years beginning in the fall of 2005. What follows is a description of a 6-

day review trip conducted by Priscilla Laws and Terri Smiley from September 29 to October 5. Since Mozambique is south of the equator, it is now spring there. Our Bursary girls only have a few more weeks before finishing their 2009 school year and going on summer break. The following is a description of our review trip.

Terri Smiley and I spent 5 days traveling along dirt roads in a two-seater pickup truck. Our journey began in Quelimane (pop. 200,000), the Province capital of Zambézia. From there, we drove to rural villages where our Bursary girls are attending school or where there are PEDRA clubs (from which our new 2010 years Bursary girls will be selected). There were five of us on the trip including Terri, me, Karen, and Jack – our CCM driver. In addition, Bill Butt who is a communications specialist came along to collect video materials for use in our upcoming 2010 fundraising campaign.

Before visiting Mozambique, we had to endure 2 days of travel from Carlisle to Quelimane by way of Johannesburg, South Africa. When we landed in Quelimane at 3 pm local time, Karen and Jack were waiting to take us to CCM headquarters. Just as we pulled into the CCM compound, Terri commented that she hoped we would hear some singing on our trip. I smiled at Terri as a group of excited young girls poured onto the porch of their PEDRA clubhouse and began singing and dancing for us. After touring Bill’s video and sound recording studio and meeting CCM personal, we went to Karen and Bill’s house for dinner and a welcome night of sleep!

At 7 am the next morning, we put our suitcases in the back of the truck alongside large yellow gasoline containers and sacks of rice and beans to be cooked for us in several of the villages we were slated to visit. Before leaving the city, we stopped to pick up frozen chickens to fortify our meals. Next, we headed to Molumbo where 62 of our Bursary Girls (a.k.a. Bolseiras) are living in a “Lar” consisting of renovated army barracks.

We bounced along dirt roads for about 8 hours before reaching Molumbo. Our trip was broken up

by brief stops in Mocuba (to buy lunch sandwiches), a regional school center in Namarroi (to confirm room reservations for a few days later), and the village of Regone (to drop off lunch food to be cooked for PEDRA girls, village officials and ourselves on our way back from Molumbo). We also stopped briefly in Maquiringa (for a quick visit to the village PEDRA club and school).

Our arrival in Molumbo was awesome. It is a beautiful community located at the base of a mountain and surrounded by red earth and lush vegetation. We were greeted by singing from a coeducational chorus organized by Pastor Mateja, who manages a medicinal garden program for CCM. About 20 minutes later, we went to the nearby Molumbo Lar that is currently maintained by our UUCV Bursary funds so girls from smaller villages in the region can stay in school through 10th grade. Of course, most of the 62 Bursary girls who reside there greeted us with song and dance.

Later we returned to Pastor Mateja's house for a candlelight dinner. The meal was cooked for us on an open fire behind the house using food Karen brought. After sleeping at the Pastor's house, we headed back at the Molumbo Lar for the day. We met with the girls who gave us a tour of their bunkrooms, garden, and water well. Later in the morning a group of about 40 of their parents, who had walked or biked long distances from outlying villages, assembled for a meeting with us while several women prepared a lunch (sponsored by the UUCV Bursary project) for us, the girls, and their parents.

During the parents meeting, we discussed improvements that are needed for the Lar such

as the small holes in the corrugated roof, the crumbling veranda, and the silt block the flow of water from the well. Toward the end of the meeting, many parents thanked us for our help and began singing.

At lunchtime, the Bursary Girls (a.k.a. Bolseiras) brought heaping plates of rice and beans to parents and visitors before serving themselves. Then the girls entertained all of us with skits that were both incredibly educational and often quite funny. These skits dealt with social issues and the importance of personal behavior in success. For example, one skit dealt with the importance of not having relations with street vendors in exchange for wares. A daughter with no money who transgressed, come home with a pair of shoes. When grilled by her parents she lied about where her shoes came from. The acting was powerful and we enjoyed watching the fathers howl with laughter by the interchange between the errant daughter and her parents. Then there was sadness as the poor girl became instantly ill, was taken to the hospital for an HIV test, and died of AIDS.

Karen noted that 14 of our Bursary girls are slated to complete 10th grade in Molumbo or Namarroi at the end of this month. Since the schools in these regional centers have no grades beyond 10th, we need to find schools that are more advanced for these girls. Before leaving Molumbo, Karen Butt asked Helena, a regional leader who helped establish the Molumbo Lar, to help us identify vocational and high schools with upper grades in the region.

Helena pointed out that for students who have completed 10th grade, finishing a teachers



Molumbo is a fairly-high elevated village at the foot of a beautiful mountain

college or nursing school only requires one additional year of study. Another alternative is for girls to enroll in 11th grade in high schools in Milange or Quelimane. Both Terri and I were very impressed by the creativity with which Helena and Karen identified the options, their relative costs, and ways to prepare girls for the rigorous entrance examinations required for admission to vocational schools.

We spent a second night in Molumbo. In the morning, we had the pleasure of visiting the family compound of our Molumbo “house mother”, Beatrice. Her family presented us with a live chicken. Estelle one of the Molumbo PEDRA educators brought us to her family compound where we met my namesake, Priscilla, who was born two years ago just before Estelle’s daughter Cecelia finished her second year of her 3 year teacher training program. Estelle presented us with a large container of homegrown beans.

Next, we headed to Namarroi with several stops along the way to visit a school where one of our former Bursary girls now teaches and have lunch with PEDRA girls in Regone and observe PEDRA activities in Mucisse. When we arrived in Namarroi all 34 of the Bolseiras, who attend school there greeted us. The next morning these girls gave us a tour of their residence and presented a program of theater, songs and dancing.

On our drive back to Quelimane later that morning we visited with a large PEDRA club in Mutilua and were, once again, entertained.

Everywhere that we stopped, Bursary or PEDRA girls treated us to songs of greeting, joyous dancing and, finally, songs of farewell. Terri did not have to “hope” we would hear some music. The self-confidence and joy expressed by these young women were inspiring.

We arrived in Quelimane and spent the night at Karen and Bill’s house. The next morning we went to an inspirational Sunday service at Macedonia – a rural Methodist church north of the City. The tiny mud, stick and thatch building was filled with song and spontaneous dancing. Later we had lunch back at Karen and Bill’s house, did some planning for 2010 and treated our hosts to a dinner out overlooking one of the rivers that flows through the city and into the Indian Ocean

After our final night with Karen and Bill and before heading for the airport we spent the morning with CCM staff in Quelimane to start mapping out procedures for reporting on our experiences and planning the 2010 campaign here at UUCV. All in all Terri and I had six unforgettable jam-packed days.



Priscilla, Terri and a house-mother posing with our 32 Bursary girls who attend school in Namarroi. They are wearing new T-Shirts and Capulanas.

The 2009 Annual Meeting of UUPLAN

By Alan Franklin

UUPLAN (UU Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network) is a new association of UU churches in Pennsylvania devoted to working with the State legislature to enact legislation that works toward our mission to transform lives and care for the world. To date, 24 UU churches have signed on; there are 48 UU churches in the State. Twelve churches were represented at the Annual Meeting at the First UU Church of Berks County, in Reading, on September 12, 2009.

There are similar statewide networks like UUPLAN in other States. There is a loose coalition of 18 States that have such networks, known as the UU State Advocacy Network (UUSAN). They are mostly working on issues identical to or very like UUPLAN's. The UU Service Committee has been supplying resources in the form of grants to help start and support these statewide networks.

UUPLAN each year selects three broad topics of interest on which to work. Last year, the first full year of operation, the topics were:

1. GLBT: Justice and fairness for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender community in Pennsylvania, especially with regard to employment, housing, and public accommodation but also to marriage equality.
2. Health: Expand the availability of affordable quality health care in Pennsylvania.
3. Global Warming: Reduce Pennsylvania's carbon footprint.

UUPLAN's strategy in working on these topics is to collaborate in each topic with an active advocacy organization devoted to lobbying on that topic. Thus on GLBT Justice UUPLAN partners with Equality Advocates, a statewide organization based in Philadelphia, but very active in Harrisburg. On Health Care UUPLAN is collaborating with the PA Health Access Network (PHAN), a broad coalition of organizations and individuals concerned about health care. However, UUPLAN has not been able to find a suitable partner on the topic of Global Warming and this choice of the third topic was to be reviewed at the meeting.

Alanna Berger (Unitarian Church of Harrisburg), point person on the topic of GLBT justice,

reported on the year's activity. A bill (HB300) to amend the PA Human Relations Act to include sexual orientation and gender identity among the covered categories at least made it through committee to the floor, but is probably not going any further this session because of lack of interest among the House leadership. A bill in the Senate (SB935) was introduced to legalize same-sex marriage but also will probably go nowhere this session. At the Federal level a hate crimes bill including sexual orientation as a protected category has been introduced into the House and will probably pass, while an attempt has been started in the same body to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act, which prohibits same-sex marriage.

Other items reported by Alanna included:

- An all-day workshop on GLBT legislative priorities and strategic planning at the UU Fellowship of Centre County in State College
- The March on Washington for Equality on October 11
- A new movie called Out in the Silence, about growing up gay in a very conservative town in the American West
- Upcoming In-District Lobbying days scheduled by UUPLAN for October 23 - 24.

We at UUCV will be actively involved.

Berry Friesen, Public Affairs Manager for PA Health Access Network, UUPLAN's partner in the field of Health, spoke about progress in Health Care Reform at the State level. (the UUPLAN point person is Cynthia Jones, UU Fellowship of Buxmont). Three bills, the focus of their efforts at the State legislature, have moved recently and have passed or have a good chance for passage. These include reauthorization of the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (passed); extending the age below which adult dependent children could be included in their parent's health care coverage from 24 to 30 years; and extending the COBRA coverage of laid-off workers to small businesses with 2 to 19 employees (passed). COBRA, a Federal law, allows the workers to retain their employer-provided health care even though unemployed, for a specified time.

On the other hand, other important measures have fallen victim to the State's budget emergency or have not moved. These include

extension of adultBasic, Pennsylvania's own Medicaid; expansion of the PA Community Health Centers (read Clinics) Program; and health insurance premium rate protection for small businesses (less than 50 employees). This latter bill, HB 746, passed the House but is languishing in the Banking and Insurance Committee of the Senate. Congregations should ask their Senators and the chairs of the Banking and Insurance Committee to get HB746 moving.

The third legislative initiative, Global Warming

- Made no progress during the year. No point person stepped forward and no suitable partner organization was found. With the hope that some recent leads might turn up the needed point person, it was decided to continue with this topic for another year, and to explore partnership with, perhaps, PennFuture, an environmental advocacy group already working in Pennsylvania.

Lobbying Workshop - An excellent discussion on how to be effective lobbyists was presented by Peter Trufahnestock, who discuss 4 principles for effective legislative advocacy (Know what you want, Know who you are talking to, Know how to talk to them, and Know how to Follow Up). His material was drawn from the book "Citizens in Action: A Guide to Influencing Government", by Stephanie Vance. Her website is advocacyguru.com and contains a lot of useful information.

Other Business - To help fund its work, UUPLAN asked that member congregations consider establishing monthly contributions to UUPLAN as a line item in their budgets. People in member congregations, not just the liaisons, are welcome to attend meetings and to join UUPLAN as members if they want to take part in the work being done. Indeed, they are encouraged to do so!

Hey, did you know that GAYT will be visiting us at the **end of November?**

Please be ready to welcome them into your homes.

CARC Begins a New Year and Explores New Possibilities

By Julie Ham

After its traditional two-month summer break, the Carlisle Area Religious Council (CARC) began the 2009-2010 year at its September monthly meeting.

The primary business at this September meeting was the need to revise and adopt a new CARC constitution; due to changes in how CARC operates due to a decline in membership, as well as the change in the organization's relationship with Project SHARE. As part of the constitution revision project, the Council will also be discussing and researching possible new projects and activities.

Elaine Livas, of Project SHARE, joined the Council at this meeting to report that the food bank is now an independent legal entity, separate from CARC, and eagerly awaiting receipt of its own 501 (3) certification. Elaine and the Council members agreed that Project SHARE and CARC would continue to work as partners in serving the Carlisle community.

Elaine also reported that, even with the state budget delay, Project SHARE was doing rather well due to their various programs, and donation and funding sources. Many other food banks, she said, were facing difficulties due to the lapse in funding.

CARC members also began discussion of the upcoming community Thanksgiving service, and the Christmas Cookie project for the prisoners and staff at Cumberland County Prison.

Join CARC in Serving the Carlisle Community

The Carlisle Area Religious Council is an interfaith organization of area congregations working to serve Carlisle community by sharing information about community organizations and agencies, and religious and charity events; and overseeing community worship services, as well as the chaplaincy program for the county prison and nursing home.

UUCV has been a member of CARC for 12 years. Each congregation may have up to three representatives on the Council.

CARC's next meeting will be held on October 20, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the United Church of Christ,

at the corner of Pitt and Louthier Streets in Carlisle.

CARC has many great ideas on how we can serve our community. If you would like to work with other area congregations, and an enthusiastic group of people, to bring positive action and change to the Carlisle area, please contact our UUCV representative: Julie Ham at (717) 243-6056 or jilham1959@copper.net.

New faces and new ideas are always welcome.

Change For The World

By Kit Franklin

Did you all see the great article our CFW program got in to the Carlisle Sentinel on Sept. 18, 2009? If not, there may still be a copy on the Bulletin Board in the entrance hall. Many thanks to all who made it possible, especially Katie McFarland and Carol McAnulty.

In September, we collected \$236 for the Correctional Justice Initiative's \$30 for 30 Women. The money will go to women in Muncy Prison. In August, we were able to donate \$223 to Carlisle Meals on Wheels.

Please be generous with your coins during October and November when the youth-oriented Common Roads (now joined with LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA) and C.A.R.C. (Carlisle Area Religious Council) will be, respectively, the recipients. During the final month of 2009, we will collect for Gather the Women.

During the first three quarters of 2009, our CFW program has collected nearly \$2000 and donated it to nine organizations in Central PA. WAY TO GO!!

SAC WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

We are always happy to have visitors or new members at our meetings. We meet at 7 pm on the 2nd Tuesdays of every other month (October is off - November is on). If you have a favorite project and would like to work under UUCV's Social Action Council, please join us.

Co-chairs: Alan & Kit Franklin

Mozambique Initiative chair: Priscilla Laws

Correctional Justice Initiative chair: Kathy Bell

GLBT Justice Initiative chair: Alan Franklin

Apples For S.H.A.R.E.

By Kit Franklin

It was dark and foggy on Saturday morning when we got up early in Newville. This was the day to go gleaning for apples for Project S.H.A.R.E. We met at S.H.A.R.E. headquarters to get directions and arrange carpools. By 9:30, a warm sun had burned off the fog and a string of cars - each loaded with eager gleaners - turned into Lerew Orchards in Adams County.

Jody Lerew explained to 50 to 60 people, many from area youth groups, some from Beth Tikva, and at least seven from UUCV, which apples were the best ones to gather off the ground.

Then he turned us loose to crawl under and around the trees to select the good fruit. Bad weather had resulted in all the Golden Delicious apples falling on the ground under the rows of trees. However, it is an ill wind that blows no good for some, and Project S.H.A.R.E. was benefitted this time. There was so much good fruit that in little more than an hour we had filled the wire cages on the back of the pick-up truck. More of the golden fruit were heaped in a pile at the end of a row to be picked up later when the S.H.A.R.E. truck made a second trip.



Carol McAnulty doing her share

Many of those apples were destined to become applesauce and cider for distribution by S.H.A.R.E. at Thanksgiving. Others would be distributed fresh.

UUCVers seen hauling full bags to the truck were: Carol McNulty, June Hoch, Wednell Smith, Marie Helweg-Larsen, Julie Ham, and the Franklins.

We were all encouraged to gather as many more apples as we could personally use before returning to Carlisle, tired and satisfied that we had done a good job for a good cause. I do not know how much applesauce S.H.A.R.E. made, but I put a half dozen quarts in my freezer! Yummm.



Apples being loaded into a nearly full truck

*Effective January 2008, UUCV will be publishing **Correctional Justice Matters**, a new semi-annual 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**.*

SAC Members

Kathy Bell
Alan Franklin
Kit Franklin
Julie Ham
Priscilla Laws
Drew Lynch