



# SOCIAL ACTION MATTERS

*A publication of the Social Action Council  
Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley  
First Quarter 2010*

## ***Our Bursary Girls are in School Thanks to Your Contributions***

By Priscilla Laws and Terri Smiley

We are pleased to report that needed funds were raised in time to assure that all 110 of the eligible PEDRA bursary girls could start school, on time, in late January. For more details, see the March UUCV newsletter at <http://www.uucv.net/newsletter.html>.

Five recent contributions have raised the total we reported in the March UUCV newsletter. As of March 31 it is \$24,300! We thought you might enjoy the following letter describing the arduous process of getting the girls ready for school. This work was done in January by Karen Butt, our on-site project director, and her assistant, Ledice Xavier.

## **Letter 232 from Mozambique 21 January 2010**

Karen and Bill Butt

*"See, I make all things new." - Revelations 21.5*

If all things are made new, then every thing is—small or large—and most importantly each individual human life. January here is a whole month of preparing for the new school year, and all month we're struck by the renewed keenness, hope and relish of the girls in PEDRA.

On the streets and rural roads we pass files of children with twig brooms and hoes on their way to spruce up their schools by weeding the yard and sweeping the classrooms. We've met with school directors in communities with PEDRA Club headquarters whose offices were stacked with textbooks for distribution. Girls of the Molumbo residence for PEDRA bursary girls had helped unload with broad smiles from the PEDRA truck supplies for their new school year.

At the rural PEDRA centre of Regone we picked up Felizarda and her new wheelchair (you met her most recently in Letter 219, last July), to drive her to Namarroi where she's one of 22 bursary



Photo:  
Our Molumbo  
2010 Bursary  
girls receive  
supplies for their  
new school  
year—pencils,  
notebooks,  
toothpaste,  
towels—items  
none of them  
have ever had at  
home.

girls starting Grade 8. Other Regone bursary-girls climbed on for the ride. Most had no suitcase—all their school-year's worldly goods fit wrapped in a capulana. Some had mangoes and bananas from their farms. In the residence will be their first time with a bed and mattress. Up and down the hills to town they sang, but when the truck entered Namarroi they suddenly fell silent. It's a big new step from their rural povoados to this small town with a few stores, a market—and, crucially, a middle high school.

Of the bursary girls who applied for teachers' college, two of six were successful—a good percentage for PEDRA when you think of the big picture: that thousands in Zambezia applied for 300 positions. Ledice of the PEDRA staff is off tomorrow to the college in Morrumbala, 3 hours' drive away, to help them get registered.

The other four continue on in high school in Quelimane, grade eleven—still an unhopd-for dream for them and their families. They'll join 4 other PEDRA bursary girls in residence here studying grade 11, and 5 in grade 12. Just the trip in from their villages is a new adventure—three separate bus rides, to a city none of them have

ever seen. They start to arrive tomorrow. We'll be waiting for their phone call from the bus depot, and take them to the residence, where older PEDRA girls will help new ones launch into their new school year.



One of our former bursary girls, Laurinda, now a teacher, dropped by on her bicycle and helped hand out supplies to younger girls. Later we visited the rural school where she teaches grades 2 and 4. Logs on forked posts for seats and desks. A ragged thatched-roof straw-walled open-sided semi-shelter. Not easy when it rains, as you can imagine from the photo showing Laurinda teaching in her outdoor classroom.

## **CARC LOOKS TO FUTURE WITH NEW CONSTITUTION AND RENEWED SENSE OF PURPOSE**

By Julie Ham

After several months of revision and discussion, the Carlisle Area Religious Council (CARC) approved its new Constitution as part of their regular February meeting.

The Council, in recent meetings, has also helped plan and publicize the annual Holocaust (Yom Ha'Shoah) Memorial Service, started planning the

2010 Community Thanksgiving service, and named a Nominating Committee to recruit a slate of Council officers for the next two-year term.

CARC is also seeking to expand its membership by encouraging area congregations to join the Council, as it explores new ways to serve the Carlisle community. Member congregations may send as many as three representatives to the Council's monthly meetings.

CARC is an interfaith organization that plans a number of annual community worship services; shares information about area events, Project SHARE and other service organizations, and other items of interest to area congregations; and oversees the chaplaincy program at the county prison and nursing home as it promotes understanding and fellowship in our community.

CARC has also overseen Project SHARE until it achieved its recent independent status; and helped provide advice and support for area organizations, CARES and His Hands Auto Ministry.

CARC's next monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 10 at 7:00 pm at the First United Church of Christ, at the corner of Pitt and Louthier Streets in Carlisle.

This year's Holocaust Memorial will be held at 5:30 pm on Saturday, April 10, at the Stern Center on Dickinson College campus. The guest speaker will be Herbert Hane; the son of a Catholic mother and Jewish father whose family survived Kristallnacht. The service is co-sponsored by Congregation Beth Tikvah, CARC, and the Asbell Center at Dickinson College.

The 2010 Thanksgiving service will be held on Wednesday, November 24, at the First United Church of Christ in Carlisle. The service will include a collection of donations for Project SHARE. Further details will be available in the fall.

If you have questions about these CARC activities, or about joining Council, please contact Julie Ham at 243-6056 or [jham1959@copper.net](mailto:jham1959@copper.net)

## **The Legislative Program of UUPLAN** (UUPLAN is the UU Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network)

By Alan Franklin

### **Freedom to Marry**

Marriage carries with it legal protections and benefits. It also provides the couple with the societal recognition and support that comes with marriage. The opportunity, not to mention the right, for same-sex couples to marry is denied by law in most states, including Pennsylvania. Breaking this barrier and obtaining the right for same-sex couples to marry is a major aim of UUPLAN. On February 8, 2010, UUPLAN staged a Freedom to Marry Day at the State Capitol in Harrisburg!

Members met their legislators, attended a press conference, and joined in a march and rally following the press conference. Unfortunately, we were prevented from participating because of the weather.

A bill, SB935, has been introduced by Senator Daylin Leach to amend Pennsylvania law to include same-sex couples in the definition of marriage. It seems unlikely to pass in this session but should be supported. Accordingly UUPLAN asked its member UU congregations to sign valentines to our legislators calling on them to support SB935. At last count, 13 congregations sent 533 valentines for 31 state senators and 521 valentines for 83 representatives. All 13 congregations are in the eastern part of the State; UUPLAN's full membership is 24 congregations, with a number from the western part of the State. We may have a communications problem. We at UUCV contributed 39 valentines to our Senators and Representatives. At about half our weekly attendance, that's not bad for two Sunday 's effort!

One disappointing development is that Sen. Eichelberger formally introduced another bill (SB707) that would amend our constitution to define marriage to be one man and one woman. The bill has gone first to the Judiciary Committee, where it is expected to be passed quickly, perhaps even without a hearing on the authority

of the Committee chairman, who has that power. Stay tuned.

### **Clean Politics/Campaign Financing**

UUPLAN has adopted a new issue for 2010 - cleaning up our state government. We need to break the bond between affluent special interest groups (and individuals) and powerful elected officials. Pennsylvania is one of only 12 states without a law on the books limiting campaign contributions. A bill, HB1910, to regulate campaign contributions at the State and local levels has been introduced into the State House of Representatives by Rep. David Levdansky (D-Allegheny) and 24 cosponsors. UUPLAN is partnering with Common Cause/Pennsylvania in supporting this bill.

House Bill 1910 would:

Require the disclosure of more information in campaign expense reports that contributors and candidates must file.

- o Establish a limit of \$2,400 on the size of contributions made by individuals to candidates for statewide office and a limit of \$500 to candidates for the state legislature or county or local office for each election (primary and general).
- o Establish a limit on contributions from PACs to between \$1,000 and \$5,000, depending on the number of donors to the PAC.
- o Place a limit of \$5,000 on the size of contributions that anyone can make to a PAC (Political Action Committee, a fund-raising organizations used by individuals and corporations).
- o Limit to \$25,000 the total combined campaign contributions any person can give in a calendar year to all candidates, PACs, and other political committees.

There is a real question as to how such legislation, not only in Pennsylvania but across the country, will fare in the light of the recent Supreme Court decision curtailing campaign financing reform. Time will tell.

## UUCV Working for SHARE

By Kit Franklin

UUCV has had a special relationship with Project SHARE, the Carlisle Area Food Bank, since soon after our congregation was founded in 1998. The current economic decline is really hurting many of us. As Elaine Livas, Executive Director of SHARE wrote recently:

*Your donation[s are] making a difference in the lives of many others who never expected to need to come to a food pantry or ask for help. It is not a shame to ask for help. It would be a shame not to respond when we have been blessed with so much.*

We became a "Pork & Beans" church and collected cans of pork & beans and other non-perishable food in a big tub in the Social Hall, and we still do. But Elaine has told us that if we can give her cash or checks, she can purchase about ten times as much food per buck as we can in the super market. So now we bring out Piggy, our paper-mache mascot, once a month and let him beg for your donations. So far in just two snowy months in 2010, we have collected \$183.81 for the purchase of badly needed food.

In February it was our youth that supported SHARE. On Super Bowl Sunday they made delicious soup, salad and bread, and served a buffet meal in the Dining Room. They even provided take-out soup for those in a hurry. Their efforts resulted in many satisfied UUs and \$152 for Project SHARE.

Now, as the growing season begins, we can look forward to Gleaning. If you have never participated in this outdoor activity, please consider doing so this year. It's a great outing for children, and the exercise probably won't hurt the rest of us. We will keep you posted on gleaning dates, but can tell you now that lettuce and strawberries start in mid-June. Yumm!



Alan and Piggy – Piggy says “oink”

### SAC WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

We are always happy to have visitors or new members at our meetings. We meet in the library at the Meeting House 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

### SAC Members

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