

QUEST



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine Newsletter

St. Augustine Beach, Florida

July and August 2016

2487 A1A South, St. Augustine, FL 32080.

3/4 miles south of State Road 312

uufsamail@gmail.com <http://www.uufsa.org/>

Fellowship sermons are held each Sunday at 10:30 a.m., September through June.

A summer program will run from July 10 through August 28, 2015 at 10:30 a.m.

No service will be held July 3

Refreshments are served after the service so all may socialize.

Audio transcripts of most presentations are available online.

Board of Trustees 2016 - 2017

President	Robin Mahonen
Vice President.....	Chuck Chambers
Secretary	Nana Royer
Treasurer.....	Dean Hull
Trustee	Pat Maguire
Trustee	Megan Porter
Trustee	Charlie West
Trustee	Pat Willott

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The *Quest* is published monthly from September through July.

Materials for the September issue are due by August 26.

Don Brandes, Editor e-mail: donaldblandes@gmail.com

Thanks to Charlie West for proofreading.

From Your President



Namaste My Spiritual Family!

I am honored and privileged to be writing this first letter to you as new President of the Board. As a relative newcomer, I am grateful to you for expressing your faith in me. The energy and activity of this beloved congregation has impressed me from the first time I walked through the doors, and I know we will accomplish great things as we work together. I hope all of you are enjoying the dog days of summer in St. Augustine, the beauty and majesty of our home town never fails to fulfill me, no matter what the season.

First, I'd like to extend gratitude to all those who have come before me, and paved the way with your loving care and attention to this beloved community. I am humbled by your efforts, and recognize that this is all the culmination of the love and devotion of so many compassionate people. The new Board will be meeting at the end of July for a Retreat, to better get to know each other, and to define our goals for the coming year.

As in any task, there is work to be done, and there are definitely some huge shoes to fill, but I am excited by the people and possibilities presented by those who have agreed to accept leadership roles here at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine. Transition meetings were held with those who are passing us the torch, and the message of "the congregation is the curriculum." sounds loud and clear to me. Our connection with Rev. Tom, our Minister, is strong and positive. My goals as your President are to help our congregation grow, by bringing our messages of peace, unity and solidarity to the greater community, who may or may not even know we are here, and by facilitating the personal spiritual explorations and growth of each member of our congregation.

In conjunction with these two goals, please watch here for more information on an upcoming community activity, "Make A Difference Day", and a congregational Mission workshop, where we, as a group, define the goals and objectives for our Fellowship.

We are pleased to let you know that we are close to reaching the financial goals we set for the congregation in our recent canvass. In addition to keeping the doors open, the lights on, and supporting our worship and other programs, your pledge and financial support allows us to move closer to the recently stated congregational goal of selecting a Music Director.

We are already moving on some longstanding issues brought up at our recent annual meeting; in particular, we all hope to be sitting a little prettier after the chair committee has brought their recommendations to us. We are also addressing lighting issues in the sanctuary, and sound baffling issues in the basement community room. Please remember, Board meetings are open to anyone in the congregation who wishes to attend. If you are unable to attend, and have concerns, please speak directly to me, or with another member of the Board. We hope to encourage and facilitate more direct communication amongst the congregation.

*May you never thirst,
Robin Mahonen*

From Your Minister

The violence in Orlando in the early morning of June 12 has cast an enormous shadow of grief and concern upon our nation. Some are calling the event the worst terrorist act on American soil since 9/11, others say it is the worst mass shooting in American history. Such classifications can be useful for those with a particular agenda but neither speaks to the heart of the problem in my opinion. As I see it, the violence itself is just a symptom of a much larger problem. Poverty, racism, and political rancor are some of the other symptoms of this larger issue.



Describing his experience in a Nazi concentration camp, noted neurologist, psychologist and author Victor Frankl writes, “Every day, every hour, offered the opportunity to make a decision, a decision which determined whether you would or would not submit to those powers which threatened to rob you of your very self, your inner freedom; which determined whether or not you would become the plaything of circumstance, renouncing freedom and dignity to become molded into the form of the typical inmate.” What Frankl noticed in the concentration camp was that those people that maintained a spiritual resiliency, those that did not renounce their own inner sense of freedom and dignity, they were the ones who survived.

Too many of us have lost our spiritual resiliency in this country, rigidly adhering to a particular political or religious perspective. While the stress of daily living is nowhere near that of a concentration camp, stress remains a serious problem in our country. The daily stress of growing economic disparity and a relentless bombardment of bad news from a ratings starved media that promotes racial, religious and political division for profit is so ubiquitous that we hardly notice it. It is no wonder, then, that we cling to the anchors of faith and politics to give us strength.

Anchors can be helpful in a storm or when we need a rest, but in times such as these when we need to unleash the creative spirit to actually deal with the problems of the world, those anchors may be only holding us back. Most of us are likely familiar with Einstein’s words on the subject, “No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.” The issue that underlies all of problems today is that we have forgotten where we come from. In our struggle to conquer nature, we have forgotten that we are nature, nature made conscious. The solution is to reconnect with our roots in the earth and the interdependent web of life. The solution is looking for new and creative ways to build and sustain communities that promote and support spiritual resiliency by helping us to connect with the earth and with each other.

I will not be around the Fellowship for much of July but I will be around for office hours and meetings in August. When I return I will be looking into how we can promote community in new and creative ways and I would like to hear your thoughts on the matter.

Rev. Tom Schmidt

Summer Program

Our Summer Program starts July 10 and runs through August 28. Services start at 10:30, and our speakers are all members of our Fellowship. These services will be informal in nature and will address a variety of interesting and thought provoking topics.

July 10 – Robin Mahonen, “Totem Animals”

July 17 – Nana Royer, “Report from General Assembly”

July 24 – Vanessa Friedman, “Music”

July 31 – Barbara Brenner and Pat Maguire. “Harriet Martineau Interview”

August 7 – David Wright. “First hand participation and observation of atomic and hydrogen bomb detonations at Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls”

August 14 – Surindar Paracer. “Humanism”

August 21 – Dean Hull. TBA

August 28 – Charlie West. “Science and Spirituality”

Please plan to attend, and don't forget to save some water from your travels to share in the Water Ceremony in September. I hope you all have a wonderful summer!

Megan Porter

Sunday, July 10 "Totem Animals" Facilitated by Uncle Eddie & Robin Mahonen, with music by Taffy Rook

We share this fragile planet with the birds, bees and beasts of the world, and share much of the same DNA. Scientific research has proven the health benefits of maintaining close relationships with animals, and they have served humanity in various capacities throughout our history. Some Native Americans and other spiritual groups consider animals to be totems, or bring messages, to those who are open to them. This informal service explores some of these concepts, and we encourage you to share your stories of animal encounters which have had meaning to you.

Sunday, July 17

UUA General Assembly

"The Afterglow–UUA General Assembly June 2016"



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Nana Royer and Dave Perkins will share highlights from GA--what impressed them most and what was particularly relevant to our Fellowship.

This is their third General Assembly. Nana is a lifelong UU and Dave is a UU since meeting Nana (18 years)!

Dining With Dignity



Our next opportunities to provide a nourishing meal for the homeless will be Sunday, **July 3 and August 7**, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. For more information, contact a member of the Dining With Dignity Team:

Mary Kellough, Nana Royer & Claudia Atkins

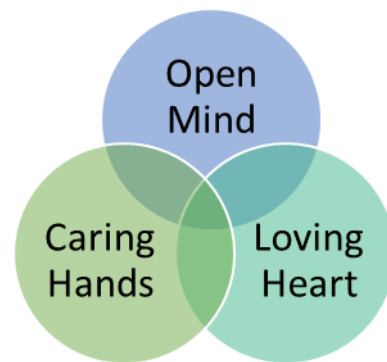
Care Connection



Our Care Connection group provides short term support and assistance for members of the Fellowship during times of difficulty. We thank everyone for their generous support with transportation to medical appointments, making meals, assistance with errands, visiting and sharing. The Care Connection includes everyone in our Fellowship willing to receive and give support at times of difficulty. Contact ***Elle Barry*** if you are in need of assistance or would like to be involved in the Care Connection Team.

Lifelong Learning – Youth

As the program year ends, we enjoy looking back at some of the special events with our children, youth and congregation.



Creating Big Bubbles

Our curriculum has been a combination of UUA materials and other lessons which support our young people in learning more about themselves and the world in which they live.

In this activity, Lily is experimenting with making bubble solution, learning about ingredients and “surface tension” and making various materials to create big bubbles. This project provided opportunities for children to apply the goals of our

chalice lighting – open minds learning about the world, caring hands as everyone helped with each step of the activity, and loving hearts as we encouraged one another and shared joys and disappointments in making bubbles.

Gems of Goodness

Introducing the UUA *Moral Tales* program, Barbara Battelle started the “Gems of Goodness” activity. This was continued each Sunday, with each person selecting a gem to place in the jar, explaining what good he or she had done the previous week. As Claudia, Pat and Peter were setting up for potluck, they joined Maggie, Ania, Greta and Hannah in discussing how each person makes a difference.



Hands Together Make Friends

Many thanks to everyone who created “hands” which were combined in this display to show that community is built as we all join together to make things happen. Thank you Claudia Atkins for this wonderful idea.

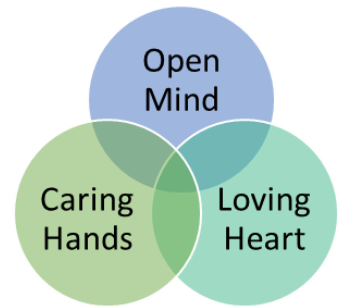
Beverly Stepping Down as Youth Committee Chair

It has been a pleasure getting to know and working with our UU children, youth and families. I wish everyone the very best in going forward with other opportunities for learning, exploration, fellowship, and lots of other good stuff.

Beverly Cree

Lifelong Learning – Children and Youth Transitions

As Beverly Cree steps down from her position as Chair of our Lifelong Learning Programs for Children and Youth, a team is in place to sustain and build upon Beverly's accomplishments during the past several years. Note that it will take an entire team to do the work Beverly has done basically single handedly! All of us on the team extend to Beverly our sincerest thanks for all that she has done on behalf of the UUFSA's children and youth. The current members of this team, in alphabetical order, are: Claudia Atkins, (386)-717-6765, claudiadeland@aol.com; Barbara Battelle, (904) 540-3720, babattelle32137@yahoo.com; Vanessa Friedman, (904) 540-3228, vfriedman32084@yahoo.com; Diana Hull, (386) 503-7011; hull_di@yahoo.com; _ Dax Speight, (904) 687-8337, amorydax@gmail.com; Marianne Wareham, (904) 325-8443, mr_wareham@yahoo.com; Pat Willott, (904)460-2388, pwillott@comcast.net.



Programs for children and youth will continue through the summer. Maggie McElhaney will work with our youngest children downstairs in our Fellowship. She will be joined by Vanessa Friedman during July and Claudia Atkins during August. Vanessa and Claudia will also provide lessons and activities for older children and youth.

Our team will meet during July and August to plan programs for children and youth to begin in the fall. If you have questions about Lifelong Learning programs for children and youth at the UUFSA, please feel free to contact any member of our team. We welcome all in the Fellowship interested in the development of children and youth to join our team.

Adult Learning

It's summer, so we'll take a vacation from Adult Learning activities. But we have to think about the future.

During the spring and fall, the two major components of our Adult Learning program have been formal, multi-session courses offered on weekday afternoons, and one-hour "Downstairs Dialogue" discussions before the service on second Sunday mornings.

Generally, these offerings have been enjoyed and appreciated by participants. But we would like to improve attendance. Perhaps there are better themes, or types of material, or presentation ideas, or offering days and times that would attract broader participation.

We will be scheduling a general meeting late in the summer, to collect our best congregational thinking of what we want to do in our Adult Learning program. Meanwhile, be thinking about what would interest you. Watch your email for a personal Eblast "Invitation", and then come join us!

Charlie West
Co-chair, Adult Learning

Food Pantry- Part 1

(Last column by Guy Reid)



The May figures were on the upswing just under the January distribution at the Food Pantry. There were 9,696 meals distributed: 303 families with 467 adults, 209 children (down from April) and 404 bags (443 in January). The UUFSA volunteers were on hand to provide much needed service to continue the SJEM mission in the St Johns County community of providing food for those ask for our assistance. Once again they donated time, food and cash with a willingness that continues to inspire me. You can rest assured that the volunteers who staff the UUFSA effort make a worthwhile statement in this vital outreach program. The distribution figures continue to be consistently higher than a year ago in May 2015. We still assist people who are homeless as well as those who have no visible means of income in this program, and low income families struggling to keep their lives together.

The Pantry depends on and operates on monetary contributions made by the Fellowship members, and friends, as well as the actual food donations collected at the UUFSA. The volunteers brought extra food again in May and we extend a special thank you for that effort. They continue to walk the extra mile for the less fortunate. Food with long shelf lives continues to be the ideal donation choice. The Pantry still needs canned fruit as well. The Pantry relies on the church donations to ensure the shelves are stocked. Monetary donations are routed through the UUFSA Treasurer Dean Hull and you can continue to make checks payable to the UUFSA with a note that the recipient is to be the SJEM Food Pantry.

The Pantry is partnering now with Haven Hospice. Still no new information yet on that enhancement. I believe Grief Counseling notices are now posted in the Pantry for those who may need their services. There are also bibles (King James version) available for those who ask for a copy at no charge.

Your faithful volunteers at the Pantry are: Cherie Dolgin, Lou and Jill Cerulli, John Porter, Nana Royer, Lennie Gemski, Kathleen Paracer, Cal Marshall, Pat Maguire, Dave and Lee Ann Forrest, Chris Fosaaen, and me. Everyone contributed to the success of this outreach program. As previously mentioned, Cal and Pat also picked up additional volunteer duties as purchasers again this year, for which we extend a special thanks..

If you find this program appeals to you and you want to help on the second or fourth Friday of the month, let Cherie Dolgin know at cdolgin@bellsouth.net. Since I am leaving the Board after June, Cherie will be taking that position on your behalf again. Thanks to all Pantry volunteers, and to the members/friends at UUFSA. Your generosity has made this rewarding and serving with the volunteers has been especially enriching in sometimes surprising ways.

Stay cool. Stay hydrated. Make every day a holiday. If there is something you have been putting off doing, it may be later than you think. Just do it!

Namaste.

Guy Reid

UUFSA Food Pantry Coordinator

Food Pantry- Part 2

(First column by Cherie Dolgin)

Many thanks to Guy Reid, who has been our Volunteer Food Pantry Coordinator and Board Member for the past two years. Guy will continue as a volunteer, but I will return to the position of UU Coordinator and SJEM Food Pantry Board member.

The Food Pantry is very grateful for the generosity the Fellowship has demonstrated with our every third Sunday collection plates. \$580 this month – WOW!!!

Please keep in mind that the Food Pantry is open five afternoons a week all year long. You can drop off food donations (canned fruit is especially needed) in the basket at the entrance of the Fellowship over the summer. Or you can mail monetary contributions to:

St. Johns Ecumenical Ministries, Inc.
PO Box 860191
St. Augustine, FL 32086
or go to www.stjohnsfoodpantry.org

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact me.

Cherie Dolgin
cdolgin@bellsouth.net
904 461-1604



July Calendar

- 1 – Darts 7:00– 9:00 p.m.
- 3 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 8 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 11 – Board of Trustees meeting 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 15 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 22 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 22 – Movie *The Sea Inside* 6:30 p.m.
- 29 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

August Calendar

- 6 – Darts 7:00– 9:00 p.m.
- 7 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 8 – Board of Trustees meeting 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 12 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 19 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 26 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 26 – Movie *The Adjustment Bureau* 6:30 p.m.
- 26 – Deadline for September Quest

Palmer's Pics

July 22, 6:30 p.m.

The Sea Inside

Academy Award winner Javier Bardem. The true story of a man's thirty year campaign to win the right to die with dignity. And his relationships with two women and his ability to inspire them through his love.



August 26, 6:30 p.m.

The Adjustment Bureau

Matt Damon and Emily Blunt. Is there an adjustment bureau out there that schedules our life for us? Is this just another Sci Fi movie? Come and decide for yourself.

You can see the previews of both these films on you tube.



Darts Nights

Darts nights are held at the Pub UU (Basement at the UU) at **7:00 p.m.** on the first and third Friday of each month and the fifth Friday if there is one. Darts night for the summer will be **July 1, 15, & 29 and August 5 and 19.** Contact Palmer Short (palshort@gmail.com) for details.



Beyond Our Congregation

Regional and National Events

Presidents' Convocations, July 8-10 in Orlando, Birmingham, Greenville, and Dallas

The goal for The Presidents' Convocation is to come together in a learning community, to network, share and deepen our experience. Far too often congregational presidents come into office without a complete understanding of the resources that are available to them outside of their individual congregations. We can sometimes feel alone in the work. The Presidents' Convocation is an opportunity to gather with other congregational Presidents and your Regional Staff and learn from one another. You can register at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/uua-southern-region-presidents-convocation-orlando-florida-registration-21829089394>

Southern UU Leadership Experience (SUULE). July 24-29 at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, VA. This inspirational experience is intended for present and future leaders of our congregation, and the registration fee, which covers all expenses for a two-person team, will be funded by UUFSA. For more information, go to www.uuasouthernregion.org

For more information about these and other events beyond our Fellowship, check the UUA Southern Region event calendar at: <http://www.uuasouthernregion.org/home.html> and the UUA web site <http://www.uua.org/>



Happenings at The Mountain

Come to The Mountain for a great program at an amazing place in the Blue Ridge Mountains – join us and let your spirit soar!



Family Camp: July 24 - 31

A program for families to come together for traditional MountainCamp activities. Parents, children, grandparents, extended family -- all are welcome! Activities include: workshops, crafts, hiking, campfires, music and singing, storytelling, time for relaxation and reflection.

A place. An experience.
A way forward for all ages.



The view from Meditation Rock is spectacular!

Southern UU Fall Institute (SUUFI) ~

Creativity in Our Lives: October 2 - 7

Come for a colorful autumn week as we explore *Play* in many ways: games, arts, conversations, stories, music and life styles.

Typical of SUUFI, the schedule balances Mind and Body. Short morning sessions link to week long endeavor in hands on, thought provoking, and heart felt pursuits. Outdoor activities, entertainment and fellowship are part of all Mountain events.

For more information: www.TheMountainRLC.org or 828.526.5838 or contact Beverly Cree, Lyn Klarman or Priscilla Gulliver at UUFSA. Plan now to be part of these or other special programs.

