



# SWUW World

*Women Helping Women  
Lighting the Way to Possibilities*

## Newsletter of Southwest UU Women

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Volume 2004 Spring Issue

### MARCH FOR WOMEN'S LIVES

The 21 Praises of Tara

Tara Is Swift Protection

Tara Is Creative Wisdom

Tara Is Impeccable Virtue

Tara Is All Victorious

Tara Is Sublime

Intelligence

Tara Is Worthy of Honor

Tara Is Invincible Courage

Tara Destroys Negativity

Tara Is True Refuge

Tara Is Joy and Laughter

Tara Is the Distributor of  
Wealth

Tara Is Auspicious Beauty

Tara Is Irresistible Truth

Tara Is Ferocious

Compassion

Tara Is Serene Peace

Tara Destroys Attachment

Tara Is Triumphant Joy

Tara Is the Transformer of  
Poison

Tara Is the Remover of  
Sorrow

Tara Is Radiant Health

Tara Is Complete  
Enlightenment

*( Go to "Om Tare! The  
2004 Women's  
Conference, page 5)*

This spring I donated to Planned Parenthood, and I am thinking of going there for my routine gynecological exams. I wish I had done this sooner and vowing that I will stay more informed on these issues. They are vital to us, to our daughters and to women around the world.

There are several groups that are getting buses together to go to the **March for Women's Lives in Washington, D.C. on April 25<sup>th</sup>**, a public demonstration of historic size in support of abortion rights and reproductive freedom for all women. Some groups have even offered low cost flights and hotels (see below). SWUW has not yet organized a contingent, but it would be great if we did.

This article is to provide resources to our members in hopes that you can organize a contingent to go to the march, or go yourself, or help to educate others in your community about the issues before us.

Unitarian Universalists, including President William Sinkford, will be marching and are meeting at All Souls UU Church in Washington the evening before the march. The new Clara Barton Intern for Women's Issues at the UUA Office in Washington, D.C., Kierstin Homblette, is coordinating UUs for the march. You may email her at [khomblette@uua.org](mailto:khomblette@uua.org)

For more information, go to the website: March for Women's Lives, April 25th, Washington, D.C., The Mall <http://www.marchforwomen.org/>

There are nearly 1,000 sponsoring Organizations including the following:

- National Organization of Women <http://www.now.org/issues/abortion/march2004/index.html>
- Planned Parenthood <http://www.ppaction.org/PPMarch04/join.html>
- National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League NARAL <http://www.naral.org/takeaction/mmp.cfm>
- American Civil Liberties Union <http://www.aclu.org/marchforwomen/index.html>

SWUW member Lorraine Levine wrote that there is a package deal from Planned Parenthood of North Texas (leaving from D/FW) for \$350 dollars including flight and hotel. For more information, contact Tara Vercellone at (817)882-1155 x2230 or email [info.public@ppnt.org](mailto:info.public@ppnt.org)

Even if you cannot go to the march, you can make it a point to tell 10 friends about the march. If you have questions, you can email

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**SWUW PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Our organization has come a long way in the past year. It's not easy overcoming the communication hurdles and transportation friction of a six-state area. We are all just volunteers, yet this has become a small nonprofit. Our conference takes in and spends \$30,000-50,000 per year. We have been gearing up over the past couple of years to bring the conference more closely under our organizational umbrella.

We have accomplished the following major objectives in the past year:

- Obtained IRS approval as a charitable non-profit. We are now able to solicit charitable deductions for the support of the organization and its programs.
- Established a list serve for the SWUWboard. Now we do most of our business on email and distance does not present such an obstacle. We have not had to do a conference call or board retreat, which has saved us some money.
- In lieu of the board retreat, we have made board meetings before and after the conference a yearly occurrence.
- We are trying to be a presence at the District Fall and Spring Conferences.
- SWUUSI lunches continue to be a popular fundraiser that helps to fund our social service projects.
- Purchased event insurance for the annual conference. This has eliminated the need for a deposit to the hotel and also provides protection for the organization in the event of a natural disaster or other cataclysmic event.
- Provided online conference registration and payment. Our website allowed conference attendees to register and pay online for the first time.

We have ambitious plans for the coming year:

- Contract with an accountant to examine SWUW's financial records. Now that we are a registered corporation, we must file our taxes and will pay a CPA to do this for us.
- Apply for status as an Independent Affiliate of the UUA, which will allow us to sponsor two workshops at General Assembly when it is in Fort Worth in June, 2005. Board member Gino Kennedy is working on our application which will require support of the

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**SWUW Supporters**

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## Seventh Principle Project – a UUA Affiliate

(Based on material found on the home page of the Seventh Principle Project - [www.uuaspp.org])

The mission of the Seventh Principle Project (SPP) is to facilitate and support the work of Unitarian Universalists by affirming and promoting the Seventh Principle of the UUA, "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." Its members believe that the Earth is in peril from human activities, and for us as people of faith, this is a moral and spiritual crisis of utmost importance.

The goals of SPP are to work toward sustainability, social justice, and protection of the Earth.

SPP sponsors the congregation based Green Sanctuary Program which provides a framework for study and reflection, and encourages individual and collective action for responding to the call to heal the Earth. In addition, annual programs and exhibit booths at General Assemblies provide Unitarian Universalists with education and collaboration opportunities around critical environmental issues.

A growing number of congregations across the continent have environmental groups which conduct environmental activities for their members, including earth based worship and spiritual practice and educational programs on a wide variety of environmental issues. SPP provides linkages to technical and organizational resources as well as networking opportunities for UU activists to support these critical efforts.

While individual steps to protect and improve our environment are important, these efforts alone are not sufficient. The "Great Work" (as Thomas Berry calls it) requires our collaborative efforts to address deep seated and systemic problems that affect the health of the living planet. Our work in our faith communities is an important part of that healing.

*SWUUW has included \$100 to join this UUA affiliated project in the budget under our Social Justice activities. For more information contact Gino Kennedy, kennedy@tarleton.edu .*

## Seeking Affiliation Status

"SWUUW is seeking Affiliation status with UUA in order to promote our organization at GA 2005 which will be held in Fort Worth. It requires the collection of many records and letters of support all of which are being worked on.

The major reason that we are pursuing Affiliation Status with UUA is that we want to make our presence know. We know that there will be many in attendance from this District and we want them to know of our existence and of the Social Justice Projects which we support. We hope to raise funds to support our efforts in this area. We hope to gain members and to publicize the fact of our existence. -- Gino Kennedy

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Southwest UU Conference.

- > Travel to Haiti. While we had seven women who were prepared to travel to Haiti this summer, current political unrest in that country makes that impossible this summer.
- > Support women traveling to the March for Women's Lives at the Mall in Washington D.C. on April 25<sup>th</sup>.
- > Recruit future conference sponsors offering greater support for conference planners. We have revised many of our organizational arrangements to support conference planners including a new board position expressly dedicated to working with potential conference hosts.
- > Board scholarships to the SWUUW conference. This year we have budgeted more scholarship moneys to allow board members who need financial assistance to attend the SWUUW conference. This cost may have been an impediment in the past to getting qualified women to serve on the board.

We are excited about these changes. I think I can say on behalf of the board that we fell that we are making progress in developing our organization, increasing our capacity to serve UU women in the Southwest and beyond.

Laura Nagel, SWUUW President

## MEET YOUR OFFICERS

### Brenda Baldwin

I am a new member of the SWUW board. I will be serving as a Director for the next two years, and I appreciate your show of confidence in electing me. My history with SWUW includes chairing the conference committee for the 2002 Women's Conference in Fort Worth and attending all but one conference since 1999. I've also edited a newsletter or two along the way. My history with the UU faith includes serving as a volunteer RE director in the early years of Westside UU in Fort Worth, two years as President of Westside, and participating in the Western UU Life Festival in New Mexico for the past four years, which included serving as the Tween Program leader in 2003. I feel that I have found an "instant community" in the UU faith.

I have been asked to specifically concentrate on fund-raising for SWUW. We have a unique opportunity when General Assembly is held in Fort Worth in 2005. I welcome your suggestions of fundraising opportunities at GA, as well as in the interim and beyond (please e-mail me at [brendabrew@hotmail.com](mailto:brendabrew@hotmail.com)). I hope to be able to bring women across the district together in a common purpose – to nurture and support SWUW in the years to come so we can continue to be of service to the women of the Southwest District and support the social actions we agree to pursue.

### Barbara Coeyman

I am delighted to join the board of SWUW as your clergy representative. I am looking forward to working with you and getting to know everyone better. My particular interests are in women in our liberal faith movement.

After graduating from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in May 2001, I received preliminary fellowship in parish ministry in December 2002. I became a part-time minister at Community UU Church of San Antonio and Northwest Community UU Church of Houston, and part-time chaplain at St. David's Medical Center in Austin. I live in Austin, where I have a daughter, Amanda, in high school and a son, Patrick, in college. Prior to ministry, I was a professor of music history at West Virginia University, where I also served as an associate in the women's studies program and did research in areas such as feminist pedagogy and women's history in music. As a performer, my area is early music: specifically on viol (viola da gamba).

For me, history matters a lot. History is spiritual practice. Knowing our past helps explain who we are in the present and influences how we see the future. Most Unitarian Universalists could stand to know a whole lot more about the history of our two religious movements. History is also important for women, for knowing the women who came before us, in whatever realm of life, reinforces our own identities. Feeling that we are part of networks with other women inspires and supports. These networks are spiritual practice.

Life is not a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming -- WOW --What a Ride!!! - - - Source Unknown

*(Continued from page 1)*

[info@marchforwomen.org](mailto:info@marchforwomen.org)

President Sinkford suggests that on April 25<sup>th</sup> those of us who cannot go to Washington should bear witness for reproductive choice in our local communities. I will begin in my own church by writing a newsletter article about the current limitations on family planning and abortion that we face here in Texas and how our national policies are limiting choices for women around the globe. For those of you interested in doing the same, I would recommend the site of the Center for Reproductive Rights (<http://www.crlp.org>) which has up-to-date information about current state legislative and judicial initiatives, national issues and the U.S. position on international efforts to curtail women's reproductive freedom.

We need to stay informed on this issue! The forces opposing reproductive freedom are mobilized and active. Let us be equally active and ever vigilant in this fight to defend our hard-won freedoms.

- - - Laura Nagel

**Southwest Unitarian Universalist Women  
Treasurer's Report and Proposed Budget 6/1/04 - 5/31/05**

	Budget 2003, 6/1-5/31/04	Actual to date	Projected to 5/31/04	Proposed Budget 6/1/04-5/31/05
<b>Income</b>				
Dues	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 785.00	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 1,500.00
Contributions	\$ 1,000.00	-	\$ -	\$ 800.00
Profit from 2003 conference	\$ 400.00	\$ 1,145.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Seed money refund	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
SWUUSI lunches	\$ 700.00	\$ 611.24	\$ 611.24	\$ 700.00
Conference	\$ -			
Registration	\$ -			
Merchandise	\$ -			
Scholarship Fund	\$ -			
Other				
<b>TOTAL Non-Conference Income</b>	<b>\$ 5,350.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,541.24</b>	<b>\$ 6,431.24</b>	<b>\$ 7,000.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Conference Seed Money				\$ 2,000.00
Web	\$ -	\$ 134.52	\$ 134.52	\$ 135.00
Scholarships				
Leadership School	\$ 200.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
SWUUC Spring Conf				
Newsletter	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 708.72	\$ 1,444.17	\$ 2,400.00
President's Expenses	\$ 500.00	\$ 496.00	\$ 496.00	\$ 500.00
Board Expenses	\$ 300.00	\$ -		\$ 700.00
Social Justice	\$ 600.00	\$ -		\$ 900.00
501 © 3 tax preparation				\$ 100.00
Reserves	\$ 1,350.00			\$ 65.00
<b>TOTAL Non-Conferences Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 5,350.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,439.24</b>	<b>\$ 2,274.69</b>	<b>\$ 7,000.00</b>
<b>NET</b>		<b>\$ 3,102.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,258.55</b>	<b>\$ 7,258.55</b>

**Treasurer's Note:**

This year the SWUW budget is in better shape than last year. New additions to the budget this year include scholarships to the SWUW Conference for board members in need of financial assistance and funds to pay an accountant for SWUW tax preparation.

On the income side, dues have increased. The SWUUSI lunch program has also been an increasing source of income for SWUW.

Amy Youngblood

## OM TARE!! THE 2004 WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

SWUWcon04 went by in a whirl of saris, flowers and faces. Our annual conference is always a wonderful event and this year was no exception. Anahata Iradah and Prema Dasara gave us a whole weekend of immersion into the Buddhist tantra of Tara.

One of the goals of the local committee that produced this year's conference was to present a whole package with a cohesive theme which flavored all of the individual components. To that end, the opening ceremony was an evocation of the 5 Wisdoms, much like the calling of the directions, but from an entirely different tradition. After the opening Prema and Anahata took us deeper into the Buddhist way with Dances of Universal Peace in an evening designed to introduce the

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philosophy and practice of the Tibetan practitioners.

On Saturday after Welcome and dialogue by outgoing President Martinique, the theme speakers shared with us how their work has been shaped by the 21 Praises of Tara; how the empowerment that comes through awareness of those strengths within enable one to help not only one's self but others. To that end they described the various projects and charities that they have initiated in places like Brazil, Kathmandu and India.

The Annual Luncheon Business Meeting was short and sweet with lots of door prizes donated by members of Channing (Edmond) and First Church (OKC). Business is business, and we ARE a 501(c)3 organization now so we have to have a meeting. We have it at lunch so that we can be assured of good attendance. Shameless: we know it. The microphone didn't work well, but we made do (and the hotel didn't charge us for it).

The workshops were designed to offer in each slot something hands on/creative, something with movement, something "head" oriented, and something with social significance. Because of the registration snafu and low registration numbers, two of the workshop leaders opted out, so the balance was not as good as we had originally planned. But the feedback forms indicated that most people enjoyed their workshops very much and felt that they were good learning experiences. All workshops were open to all participants.

Our policy of requiring maiden attendees to be at least 12 years old was well received. The maidens who came said that when younger, they would not have had the interest in attending as equal participants with adults. All of us need to be aware that it is our own responsibility to integrate ourselves into a unified group. Our maiden members were a lively and colorful addition to our gathering (especially at the Banquet)!!

The banquet - Indian Dinner - was not as successful as we had hoped. The chef had bought serving platters especially for the home-style serving plan. This was supposed to eliminate having to so much to and fro serving making it faster and smoother. Then the chef had to go out of town, and the serving dishes were used at lunch (?). Soup bowls were used to serve at dinner. Too small. Too few servers. Aarrgh. The ethnic food was a hit with most people, and the menu was published in the brochure and in the packet so everyone knew what to expect.

The excellent entertainment, "Miss Brown to You," has become our resident SWUW band, having played in one incarnation or another at five (maybe six) of our events. They love us, and we love them. At 11:00,

Anna Holloway led a stellar Late Night Ritual. In keeping with the theme of exploring the Goddess within disparate traditions, we gathered to celebrate all forms of divinity, within and without.

The Mandala Dance of Tara, our closing ceremony on Sunday morning, was one of the most moving experiences we have ever had in all the years of our conferences. Thirty two women participated as Musicians, as Protectors, as Taras. They had worked all day Saturday, even into the excursion time, and on Sunday they were transformed into a riot of colors complete with jewels and crowns. Each woman was a true manifestation of the goddess. Watching them brought me to tears.

In closing, I would like to share with you an email I received from Barbara Roshaven. Her sentiment was echoed by many communications we received and from a great number of the feedback forms.

*"Thank you for convening the conference. I feel refreshed, at peace, and so full of love. I see the perfect person in those around me. I have been able to let go of some anger and frustration and improve relationships. I have felt inner joy all day. I don't know what tomorrow will bring, but I have had a wonderful today.*

*Every women's conference brings me delightful surprises in what I learn, in new friendships, in reconnection with loving friends, and in acceptance of myself and others. Every conference changes me in a way I can never explain in words, only in my expression of myself as I live. I have been changed by this conference in beautiful ways. I will never forget the beauty of Prema's smile-inexpressible. I will never forget seeing the beauty in all of the Tara dancers and thinking how limited our culture is in its definition of beauty.*

*Again, thank you. You have fed my spirit. If you knew how much I consider myself to be a rational being and how the word spirit is generally not in my vocabulary, you would appreciate more how this weekend has affected me. I hope it brought you joy, too."*

- - - Elizabeth Muller

## V-DAY—HEALING COMMUNITIES AND BUILDING COMMUNITY

V-Day is a global movement to stop violence against women and girls. It is a fierce catalyst that promotes creative events to increase awareness, raise money, and revitalize the spirit of existing anti-violence organizations. V-Day calls attention to the worldwide violence against women and girls including rape, battery, incest, female genital mutilation, and sexual slavery by funding the creation and development of innovative programs to stop the violence. Through V-Day campaigns, local volunteers and college students produce annual benefit performances of Eve Ensler's award-winning play *The Vagina Monologues* to raise awareness of and funds for anti-violence groups within their own communities. College and Worldwide Campaigns are held around Valentine's Day (the V-season currently runs from late January until early March). The V in V-Day stands for Victory, Valentine and Vagina, and in this election year, V also stands for Vote.

I first learned of V-Day through a small blurb in a UUWF (Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation) newsletter. At that time, I had recently served on the organizing committee for the 2002 Fort Worth SWUJW Women's Conference, and I was in awe of the power of a group of women working together with a common purpose. I sent out feelers to members of SWUJW in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was happy to hear that several of the women of the Denton UU church had participated in a College Campaign and were eager to participate again. We initially hoped to organize a performance troupe to support various campaigns organized by local SWUJW groups in our area (each city is allowed only one Worldwide Campaign). Although that hope did not come to fruition, we did organize and stage a V-Day event in Fort Worth in 2003, with a strong contingent of UU women. I subsequently discovered that some of the women of the Little Rock UU church had played an active part of a V-Day campaign (see *article on page 8*), and I'm sure there are other UU women in our District involved in the V-Day movement. UU's are well represented in V-Day campaigns. Many UU churches have offered their facilities to local campaigns and, in my case, Westside UU has served as our fiscal sponsor.

The subtitle of this article sums it all up for me. V-Day's goal of ending violence against women and girls supports the healing of communities around the world. The most precious magic of V-Day, however, is the community building that takes place while staging such an event. I've met some

incredible women in my life, but the women on our V-Team are definitely at the top of the list. These women are willing to put themselves on stage to read the stories of other women. Some of the stories are amusing, some are shocking, and some are very, very tragic. They invite others to support the V-Day movement, sometimes against opposition from the local community and even their immediate family, and sometimes with support from unexpected places. These women bond with one another in community, while also bonding with all the women around the world who have been victims of violence, along with those who are working to end violence and serve victims.

You may wonder why there would be opposition to a movement to raise funds to stop violence against women and girls. I believe the answer lies in the way in which many people relate to the subject of women and their sexuality. When talking to several women who found *The Vagina Monologues* offensive, I've found that most are offended not so much by the words used (none of which haven't been heard in an R-rated movie), or even by the subject matter (including sex, masturbation, pedophilia, rape and domestic abuse), but by the fact that women were talking about such things in public. I perceive they are most offended by the idea that "nice girls shouldn't talk about that". Some are shocked by the slang used in the monologues, particularly the use of a word that has its roots in ancient cultures. That word can be traced to Cuneiform, the most ancient form of writing, used by the Kunta ("woman" in near eastern and African languages, a word that can mean "a queen who invented writing and numerals." Do I understand why some women find the "C-word" offensive? Yes, I do, but I'd much rather reclaim it than try to hide it, allowing it to continue to be used as a hurtful degrading term.

The Vagina Monologues is very much about bringing things out of hiding. I'm sure the funny, aggressive monologue *My Angry Vagina* has stimulated discussions between women and men, and mothers and daughters, and so on, that would never have happened if the words of that monologue hadn't been brought out of hiding. I know the monologue *The Woman Who Liked To Make Vaginas Happy*, about a tax lawyer who becomes a sex worker for women, has opened a door for frank discussion between intimate partners, close friends, and others. I performed that monologue in 2003,

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## MY V-DAY EXPERIENCE

My 27-year-old baby daughter who lives in Seattle asked me if I now had a theater jones; did I crave the applause and the laughter? I said no. That's not what I'll crave from my brief experience with the limelight as a cast member in Arkansas' first production of the Vagina Monologues. What I'll thirst for is that incredible sense of community, the first actual bi-racial and multicultural community that I've known since moving to Arkansas.

I may well remember the event on my deathbed, but it won't be the applause and laughter. It will be...

...the sight and sound of Verda Booher beautifully accomplishing the first read through of the lyrically haunting account of a gang rape while breast feeding her infant. And, I will never forget that infant, his face a faded Xerox of his mother, as he blessed almost every rehearsal with his belly laughs, hungry cries and burps.

...the response of so many people to the declaration by Donna Riley that she was producing the Vagina Monologues despite the fact that Donna had no theater experience, no experience organizing a major event, and one might dismiss her (if one were very superficial) with the term "home schooling housewife". The reaction of those who knew her was uniform - "If anyone can do it; you can, Donna."

...the knowledge that much of the reason that the cast was close to racially balanced reflected not just the fact that the organizational triumvirate was integrated but the personal interracial connections of those attracted to the project from the beginning. And, the fact that for those few hours a bi-racial audience shared a seminal (I'm not sure that word belongs in a piece about *The Vagina Monologues*, but I guess it's integration of another kind.) experience as one.

...the connections that brought several communities together who then discovered even more connections than they had dreamed.

...the support of my church community who did much more than rent the space at a wonderful rate. They were brave enough allow their name to be

used in advertising an event that would have sent most churches into fainting spells, and the people of the church pitched in to prepare the church for the event and clean up after the event. I'm told that Nell Matthews Mock, the captain of the facilities team, found her calling that night as a traffic cop when she found it necessary to go out to Reservoir Road to avert a traffic jam. I developed a whole new sense of community after the event when an internet search turned up scores of Unitarian Universalist churches across the country who have participated in producing *The Vagina Monologues*. I even found one minister of my faith who performed one of the monologues last year.

...the patience and loving encouragement that the professional actors lavished on those of us with little or no experience. They were supportive and they also gave me courage and respite from a bad case of the jitters in the chair closets, dubbed "the fallopian tubes" by Donna, that served as our backstage. Somehow I believe that it would have been a poorer experience had we not been bunched up together, required to become contortionists to change costumes.

...all of us in my fallopian tube weeping as Anthony Williams read a poem he wrote about his feelings when his wife was raped

...weeping again in sheer ecstasy or triumph or something as Jamillaah Carmichael jubilantly lead the audience in chanting a word I can't use in this paper, in reclaiming the word from its pejorative past.

...and the audience! Yes, it was great that it was integrated, but they were much more than a symbol. They made the show come alive at least as much as the creative people did. It was an event, a festival, much more than a theater performance.

As the Eve Ensler character says in the piece about the birth of her grandchild, "I was there." And, who knows what we birthed?!

*Editor's note: The above article was written after V-Day 2003. Little Rock was in the midst of staging their 2004 event as this issue went to press.*

*- - - by Jolinda Stephens, Little Rock, AR*

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and it was a learning experience for me because I had to "get inside" that woman in order to deliver it effectively. It gave me an entirely new perspective on sexual relations and lifestyles, and it definitely gave others a new way of thinking of me.

New perspectives and new ways of thinking are positive outcomes of a V-Day experience, along with funds raised to support local organizations working to end violence in the local community and the community support of V-Day and its message. I invite you to explore the subject further by visiting [www.vday.org](http://www.vday.org). Please don't hesitate to contact me at [brendabrew@hotmail.com](mailto:brendabrew@hotmail.com). - - - Brenda Baldwin, Fort Worth, TX

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## WHAT I KNOW FOR SURE ABOUT THE SWU UW 2005 CONFERENCE

I know you will love the Warwick Hotel in the Houston Museum District, where our conference will be held. The Warwick has an old world European feel. The view from the 12<sup>th</sup> floor is divine. The tall oaks and winding paths of Hermann Park! Mecom Fountain! Museums on every corner! Twinkling skylights on buildings far and near! For sure you will be glad you journeyed to our Museum District. If I were you, I'd be tempted to come a day early, so that there would be time to visit any number of nearby attractions: the Museum of Fine Arts, the Jung Center bookstore, or the Japanese Garden in Hermann Park.

I know you will feel welcome at First Unitarian Universalist Church here in Houston. Many of us are already looking forward to your arrival. We will make you feel right at home! The Church is only a few short blocks from the Warwick. If walking is not your thing, the hotel will provide courtesy vans. Speaking of walking, there is an outdoor labyrinth just a few blocks away from First Church.

I feel moved to tell you there is something very coincidental going on with me, the Museum District and this conference. Ever since I moved to Houston from the East coast, many of my most significant spiritual experiences in community have taken place on the few square blocks referred to above... Moments when I gazed on a Chagall painting at the MFA and went home to write a poem about it, moments when I gathered with my beloved Changing Women's wisdom circle at First Church, walked the labyrinth or danced like a child reborn at the Jung Center..... I know for sure that for me, there is a spiritual intensity to the Houston Museum District, an almost uncanny sense of vortex. I am drawn there like a wolf to the moon. Join us February 4-6, 2005! I know you will be glad you did.

*Keddy Ann Outlaw*  
SWU UW Secretary

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Southwest Unitarian Universalist Women

To join mail in the form below with your check to: Amy Youngblood, SWU UW Treasurer  
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