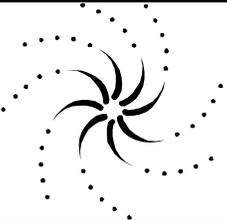


# SWWIRL

Summer 2002



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## THINK SWUUSI...THINK LUNCH

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### President's Column

THINK SWUUSI!!! SWUW will be very much in evidence at SWUUSI this July.

Lunches Plus – Dolores Ruhs, Ft Worth Westside UU Church, a retired caterer, will be in charge of the lunches we will be offering. Her menu plans for SWUUSI, as of today are:

**MONDAY** Spaghetti with a choice of sauces, Green Garden Salad, Bruschetta with cheese, and to top it off, Cheese Cake.

**TUESDAY** Poppy Chicken, rice and broccoli, Caesar salad, hot rolls, and yummy peach cobbler

**WEDNESDAY** Beef enchilada Casserole, south of the border Vegetarian bake, Lettuce, tomatoes, onion salad, corn, Mississippi Mud Pie (my favorite)

**THURSDAY** Spiral cut ham, baked beans, cole slaw, corn cobbles, Texas toast, Peanut butter or snickerdoodle cookies (oh, to be a kid again)

Seven people have signed up to help. But do not despair! YOU will have an opportunity to sign up to help. We will have sign up sheets available at the registration desk Sunday when you check in! You can volunteer to help serve or clean up one or more lunches. We are doing a lot of advertising of the "heart healthy" menus and are hoping that everyone is aware that all profits will go to support our Social Service Projects. We are hoping for a REALLLLLLLY big turn out for our four meals. We did clear almost \$500 last summer and that alone supported our Heifer project! SO DO PLAN TO HELP WITH AT LEAST ONE LUNCH!

Every day, following lunch, our Social Projects Committee is arranging to have a table set up for those who would like to discuss social justice projects. See Laura Nagel's report (*Social Justice, Social Action, Social Service, and Education*) for more details.

Need program ideas. Look into the program discussion guides available from Northwest Earth Institute. They have four discussion courses available for testing by interested groups around the country. The titles are: *Exploring Deep Ecology, Voluntary Simplicity, Choices for Sustainable Living, and Discovering A Sense of Place*. They require a group of eight to 12 people who will meet eight or nine times. There is a charge of \$15 (plus postage and handling fee) per book and the books are sold only in groups of six or more.

See **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**, Page 2

### SOCIAL SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

#### DO YOU WANT TO

- ❖ *have a real intergenerational experience?*
- ❖ *get to know a wonderful group of kids?*
- ❖ *use your talents and your hands in social action?*

SWUW members and friends will have these opportunities at SWUUSI. The high schoolers' YRUU group will travel from their camp on Lake Murray by bus to Ardmore on Tuesday afternoon, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, to clean up an area of town. We can go with them or meet them there.

After the work is done, you can stay and have supper at a restaurant in Ardmore with the high schoolers or return to Lake Texoma. If you eat with the YRUUs, you will be back by about 10 PM.

There will be a sign up sheet in the lobby so we will know how many are going to participate.

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Our World Is One World p. 134, *Singing the Living Tradition*

*Our world is one world:  
the thoughts we think affect us all:  
the way we build our attitudes,  
with love or hate,  
we make a bridge or wall.*

#### **Social Justice, Social Action, Social Service, and Education at SWUW**

Busy women today seem impatient with the concept of **social service**. No longer is there very much time available for work as a Pink Lady in the hospital, or stuffing envelopes for the political party of your choice, or volunteering at church. Some women insist on a new vocabulary. They want to transform basic social institutions to create a more just society, and they are willing to engage in **social action** to accomplish it. Social service can be an element of a balanced **social justice** program. But such a program, if it is to capture the intensity felt by many women today, must also involve social action and to these I would add **education**. Without education it is difficult for us to agree on what we will do about a problem.

Up until this last year SWUW had not had education, social justice, social action or social service as part of its mission. At its last Annual Meeting the membership voted to invest \$5,000 to fund village banking and \$500 to the Heifer Project and \$300 to the Southwest Unitarian Universalist

Conference Chalice Lighter program which funds new and growing UU congregations in the district. So, we have an auspicious beginning. . .

### **Village Banking and the Heifer International Program (HPI).**

Since the conference several of us have been busy trying to put these plans into action. We have, after consultation with FINCA International, Inc. (The Foundation for International Community Assistance) recommended that the Board create a village bank in Les Cayes, Haiti, the second largest city in Haiti which is identified by FINCA as the poorest country in the western hemisphere. There our money will provide loans to approximately 40 women, based on an average loan of \$100. FINCA has struggled to keep the program alive in Haiti because of the country's political turmoil in the last decade. But they have a new director and are working with other non-governmental organizations to make improvements in the country.

An exciting opportunity for us, is also available through FINCA which will arrange a tour of Les Cayes for 10-12 SWUW members for the grand opening of this village bank. Anne Folan of FINCA International would go with the tour and make all of the arrangements. She estimates the cost will be approximately \$1500-2000 per person for a four-day trip. The trip could occur as soon as next February. Those interested in receiving more information about the trip should email Laura Nagel at nagelsfour@aol.com or phone (713) 524-5608.

After some investigation, we discovered that Heifer Project International also has a project in Les Cayes. Heifer is not unlike village banking in that its aim is sustainability. Through the gift of animals, which are ongoing sources of food and income, Heifer helps families and the program benefits the entire community as each family who is a beneficiary agrees to pass on the offspring of their animals to another needy family in their area. In Haiti, the project works with farmers' associations to train farmers and to encourage the participation of women in ecologically sound farming practices. They provide animals to the farmers and encourage them to breed the animals and to pass on animals to other members in the association.

### **SWUUSI**

Since SWUW members are scattered across a six-state area, it's difficult for us to confer. SWUUSI presents a perfect opportunity and we have arranged that at our annual luncheon program, which takes place over the course of the week, we will reserve one table for discussion of social justice matters. The program will be varied so join us everyday for a different lunch-time discussion; or just come once, but come and connect with us. Also at SWUUSI we are trying to arrange to work with the high school youth for their annual social service project at Ardmore, OK. Please see Social Service Opportunity on Page 1.

### **Social Justice Planning**

In the last issue of SWIRL, we listed the names of 18 SWUW members who had expressed an interest in working on the Social Justice Committee. This was a very impressive number indicating to us that this is an issue of great interest and concern to our members who want to be active and involved in social justice work. The board has heard you and is working now to incorporate social justice into the bylaws of the organization. I have been invited to participate in the Executive Board retreat in Denton to discuss this very issue.

Because SWUW Social Justice is developing such a large and complex agenda, it has been a struggle to think of ways to involve more women in meaningful ways when we are spread over such vast distances and meet so infrequently. As another way of involving more folks, I have formed three social justice task forces to deal with the following three areas:

- 1) Social justice initiatives at SWUUSI which Sheila Swearingen (918.584.3509, email: Sheila@fullcir.com) has agreed to chair;
- 2) Management and oversight of ongoing projects including the micro-lending and HPI initiative which will be chaired by Sarah Oglesby (214-860-2214, email: sco5320@dccd.edu); and
- 3) Planning and liaison with other women's groups, which I will chair.

These three are all interesting areas and it makes it hard to pick, but you can join all three if you're interested. They are each complex enough to require some expertise. So, if you would like to get involved in any or all of these three areas please contact one of the three of us whether or not you have signed up previously. See you at SWUUSI!

--Laura Nagel, Social Justice Chair

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### **President's Column**

(Continued from Page 1)

To get more detailed information, you can e-mail the Northwest Earth Institute at [info@nwei.org](mailto:info@nwei.org) or write them at 506 SW 6<sup>th</sup>, Portland, OR 97204, or call 503-227-2807.

Have you a favorite Website concerned with your social concern? Send it to us and we will share it with the rest of our members.

When someone asks what are the most important things we can do to help those less endowed with the basics of living – our answer is help them to support themselves economically. WE ARE NOW DOING THAT through our two Social Concerns projects. This article, excerpted from an OP-ED page of the New York Times of May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2002 points us in the next direction.

The contribution of basic education to development is not, however, confined to economic progress. Education has intrinsic importance; the capability to read and write can deeply influence one's quality of life. Also, an educated population can make better use of democratic opportunities than an illiterate one. Further, *an ability to read*

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**Am I a Member of SWUUV?**

If you have paid dues in the past year, yes, you are. If you have not, you can become a member by sending annual dues of \$5 to the Treasurer listed at left. Please include your full name, mailing and e-mail addresses, phone number, name of women's group and/or church or fellowship, if applicable.

To determine your current status, please look on your mailing label. If there is a year shown in the upper right hand corner of the mailing label, it is the most recent year in which we have record of your dues (if the year is followed by "NM", you paid the non-member fee and will receive newsletters for 1 year). If no year is shown, we have no record of dues receipt. Any questions, please contact our President listed at left.

**IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID DUES (or non-member fee) IN THE PAST YEAR, YOU WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE MAILING LIST AFTER THIS ISSUE OF SWWIRL.**

(If your mailing label has a "2001" or "2002", your dues are considered "current".)

**If your records indicate that you should be receiving a newsletter and don't receive one, we are sending copies to each church. PLEASE LET US KNOW if you believe we have an error and we will attempt to correct our records! Some errors occur when churches pay for many members and DO NOT SEND A LIST of the members!**

**MOVING?**

Please send your change of address to SWUUV or your SWWIRL may never find you!

Send changes to: [SWUUV@hotmail.com](mailto:SWUUV@hotmail.com) or to: Brenda Baldwin 4400 Inwood Rd Fort Worth, TX 76109

**SWWIRL (SouthWest Women In Religion Letter) is a quarterly publication of SWUUV (SouthWest Unitarian Universalist Women).**

**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN** *continued from Page 3*

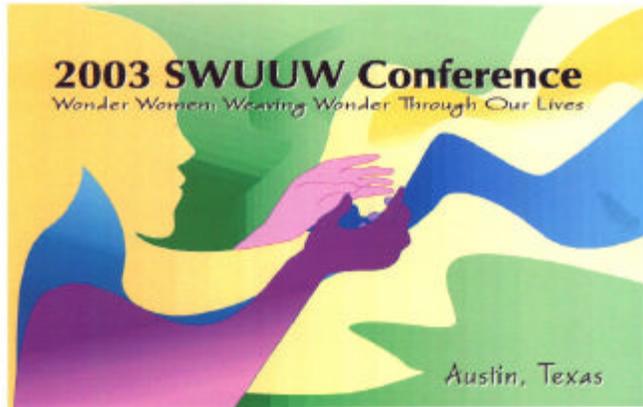
fields, a benefit to men as well as women, since *women's empowerment through literacy tends to reduce child mortality and very significantly decrease fertility rates...* the fertility rates in the different districts that make up India vary extremely widely, from almost five (roughly, five children per couple) in some districts to less than 1.7 in some others. Empirical investigations by Mamta Murthi and Jean Drèze indicate that only two general variables significantly help to explain these differences: *female literacy and female economic participation.*

The need for a new kind of partnership — a global alliance — on schooling is hard to exaggerate. The time to live by positive goals has certainly come — not least for the leaders of G-8 countries who meet at a summit next month in Canada.

*Amartya Sen, master of Trinity College, Cambridge, is honorary president of Oxfam. He received the Nobel Prize in economics in 1998.*

***The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person doing it.*** (-- Chinese Proverb)

Blessed be, Gino Kennedy



### Maiden Program 2002:

Hello all Erin J. Dunn here. At the conference in Fort Worth I was the curator for the Maiden Program. I have an issue to raise here. The Maiden Program didn't run quite as smoothly as I had hoped. Jennifer Sanders and Rosemary Taylor (also maidens) were the two people helping me, but I didn't tell them to do anything. One reason, I wasn't quite sure what I was really doing!

The original plan was for ages 9-19. But I think that was a stretch. Girls ages 14-19 don't need a program they are old enough to do the workshops with everyone else and also to take care of themselves. In the Maiden Program, as it was structured for the Fort Worth Conference, I had planned things to do for girls 12 and over, but the majority of girls that showed up were younger. They were resistant to participate in the planned activities. I needed an adult there to help me. Not to run the program, but just to make sure the girls stayed in order.

I would also like to thank everyone for letting me do the program I now I know what to go back and fix about the program! When the program did go the right way I did enjoy it! I really enjoyed the girls I think they all walked away feeling good about the program!

-Erin J. Dunn

### Microcredit – how it came to be –

*a book review by Gino Kennedy*

I have just finished reading a book that I want to share with all of you! Especially I want to share it with those who are uncertain what our Microcredit project is all about. This book by Muhammad Yunus will give you an inside view of how microcredit projects came to be, how they expanded around the world, and how they have changed life for millions of the poorest of the poor.

The book tells how his **Gameen** project evolved, how this micro-lending program would be the basis for a nationwide "bank for the poor" serving 2.5 million people in Bangladesh, how it would be adapted in more than fifty countries spanning five continents.

Dr. Yunus, an economics professor and department head at Chittagong University located near the village of Jobra, Bangladesh was the originator of the concept of Microcredit. In 1974 Bangladesh was in the midst of a very serious famine.

Dr. Yunus became aware of the seriousness of the problem when skeleton-like people from remote villages began showing up in the railway and bus stations Of Dhaka, the capital. Soon the trickle of starving people became a flood. "Hungry people were everywhere. Often they sat so still that one could not be sure whether they were alive or dead." Page *vii*. His description of death from starvation is most vivid. He says, "There are many ways for people to die, but somehow dying of starvation is the most unacceptable of all. It happens in slow motion. Second by second, the distance between life and death become smaller and smaller, until the two are in such close proximity that one can hardly tell the difference. Like sleep, death by starvation happens so quietly, so inexorably, one does not even sense it happening. And all for lack of a handful of rice at each meal." page *vii-viii*.

Dr. Yunus felt that none of the economic theories he taught reflected the life around him. He asked himself what good were the complex theories when people were dying of starvation on the sidewalks and porches across from his lecture hall. He wanted to cure this and other societal problems. He resolved to become a student again with the people of the village of Jobra as his teachers. He discovered an entirely new economics from the poor there. He learned about the problems that they faced from their own perspective. He tried a number of things, some of which worked, some did not. One approach that worked well was to offer people tiny loans for self-employment. These loans provided a starting point for cottage industries and other income-generating activities that used the skills the borrowers had.

Learn how he and his students gradually overcame the tradition of *pardah* designed to uphold the Koranic injunction to guard women's modesty and purity. Learn how the repayment system evolved and why it remains so high, 98% in most groups. Find out the socio-economic reasons for focusing on the granting of loans to women.

The last several paragraphs of the book predict the result of his dream: the total eradication of poverty. He asks, "Can we really create a poverty-free world? A world without third-class or fourth-class citizens, a world without a hungry, illiterate, barefoot underclass?" His answer is, "We have created a slavery-free world, a smallpox-free world, an apartheid-free world. Creating a poverty-free world would be greater than all these accomplishments while at the same time reinforcing them. This would be a world that we could all be proud to live in." p.247

Yunus, Muhammad, Banker to the Poor, Micro-lending and the Battle Against World Poverty. Published by Public Affairs, New York, 1999. ISBN 1-891620-11-8-hc

**EAT LUNCH AT  
SWUUSI**

*a delicious way to earn money*  
for **SOCIAL ACTION** projects

Editor’s Note:

Tony Woods is 13. The following poems were requested by our president, Gino Kennedy.

INTRO: I came to write these two poems after being asked to do a couple of readings for the service lead by the Sunday school students of Westside Unitarian Universalist Church [held on May 12th, 2002]. The first poem I wrote was one based around all seven principles. The second is based around the third principle alone .

-Tony Woods

**7 Principle Jackpot**

<i>What are Principles?</i>	Help each other
<i>Options.</i>	Care for each other
<i>When are Principles?</i>	be with each other
<i>Everyday of our lives.</i>	love each other
<i>Why are principles?</i>	each other
<i>For love.</i>	
<i>Where are principles?</i>	These seven principles are a
<i>In our community.</i>	web entangling life, love and
<i>Seven little principles let us</i>	liberty into our community.
<i>do a Hundred large things.</i>	--Tony Woods, 13

**3 is a magical #**

Three is a magical number  
 Oh can't you see  
 bringing acceptance between you and me  
 yes three is a magical number  
 Number seven may bring us together but  
 Three keeps us from tearing apart  
 Oh ya, three's a magical number.  
 --Tony Woods, 13

**SouthWest UU Women’s History:  
 An Interview with Mary Thomason**

by *Connie Dunn*

As we look forward in this twenty-first century to women and our SouthWest Unitarian Universalist Women, it is interesting to hear that the struggle that SWUW has overcome in the last couple of years is not a new struggle. Women have always been busy. Women have always been at the forefront of social action issues. And our group has always been active in raising money.

Mary Thomason is a past president of SWUW. She thinks it was about 1970. She started the Lunches Plus program at SWUUSI (SouthWest UU Summer Institute). Mary is 80+ years young and lives in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The *Lunches Plus* program is an alternative meal solution at SWUUSI. Usually you have two choices: fix it yourself if you’re lucky enough to have gotten a cabin or eat in the Lodge’s restaurant, which always fills up about lunchtime.

While in recent years, the attendance has fluctuated. Due to proper promotion and interest within SWUW, it has continued. This year, we will be offering heart-healthy meals. And our programming is being looked at with new eyes.

For Mary Thomason, this sounds like par. Of course, she hopes we keep on going and is very pleased with our social action investments.

“I thought we ought to have a project that would make money,” recalls Mary. I suggested it to the president then, but she said it wouldn’t work.”

But though the president didn’t believe in the *Lunches Plus* program, Mary persisted. “I went over and bought groceries. I made a tuna and raisins casserole,” she laughs. “You have to make good ice tea and lots of it!”

The money in the first few years was raised for the continuation of SWUW. But Mary had been involved with social action for “eons,” she says. “I started recycling newspapers in Little Rock and the money went to charity—a community garden project, I think. I started the food bank in Little Rock, which eventually became the Food Bank Network of Central Arkansas. It was all hard work but fun,” she recalls.

In starting Lunches Plus, Mary says, “what we did was find out what people wanted to talk about. And if you get good programming, then people will come. You have to get people who are interested, because then it doesn’t hit deaf ears. Margaret Deininger kept Lunches Plus going and Kitty Clark in Austin is another one.”

There have been many people, including last year’s Mary Francis and her helpers who have kept the *Lunches Plus* going. And though I cannot recall everyone who has worked at SWUUSI on the *Lunches Plus* program, I’m quite sure the list is very long.

The *Lunches Plus* program predates the SWUW Women’s Conferences, which started in 1987 in Midland, according to Kathy Calhoun. And our first SWWIRL (SouthWest Women In Religion Letter) was first published in 1989.

If you know some of the SWUW history or have it stored in some format (hard copy or electronic) send it to me at swuuw@hotmail.com or via snail mail at 1807 N. Elm St., PMB238, Denton, TX 76201. If you’d rather just tell me and let me write it down, call me at 940-243-5125. Our history is too precious to lose!

**Friendship Force**

by *Beverly Fogelman*

Fort Worth First Jefferson UU Church

**Do you want to know what I have done on some of my vacations?** *If not, don't bother to read any further; but if you want to learn about a wonderful way to travel, Read On.*

In Australia, I stayed on a sheep farm and bumped across the field looking for "roos" in a "ute". In Tasmania, I borrowed a fancy hat and went to a Champagne luncheon at a yacht club and watched the Melbourne Cup. In Nagoya, Japan, I spoke to women about their lives and found out they were just as interested in the lives of women in the United States. In Tsu City, Japan, being in a home with three children gave me the opportunity to watch child rearing practices and aspects of their education system. In Canada, I visited a Hutterite home. In New Zealand, I went to a rain forest and rode a horse on the beach.

How did I have all these wonderful experiences? The answer is **Friendship Force**.

Friendship Force, Inc.(FFI) a non profit organization, is active in more than 60 countries, promoting good will through an extensive program of home stay exchanges.

See **FRIENDSHIP**, page 6

**FRIENDSHIP**

*Continued from Page 5*

It has fostered and arranged cultural exchanges since 1997 with a single purpose: to create an environment where personal friendships are established across the barriers that separate people. Its motto is "a world of friends is a world of peace."

As ambassadors, residents of foreign countries visit and live in our homes for a period of a week at a time. The second week is spent in another city. When we are ambassadors, we travel to another country and live in their homes. It is not necessary to have guests in your home for a week in order to participate in the group, you may be a day host to assist host families.

Other FFI opportunities include missions to visit countries that are difficult to visit. Bridgebuilders offers an opportunity to travel with others who share your interests or profession. Friendship Force has festivals all over the world.

"Faces not places" describes the FFI mission. It is not a travel club although sightseeing activities are usually included; the primary goal is mutual understand and friendship.

This year the Fort Worth Friendship Force Club is going to Belgium. For information on the Fort Worth club write June Chavern, PO Box 16181, Fort Worth, TX 76162-0181.

The International web site is [www.friendshipforce.org](http://www.friendshipforce.org).

Try it, you will like it.

Some of the material in this article is adapted from Friendship Force International information.

**Becoming Wonder Women--  
A Conference for us all!**

The UU women of Austin, Texas are hard at work planning next year's SWUW Conference--we look forward to being your hosts for a "wonder" fun time as we celebrate our theme: *Becoming Wonder Women: Weaving Wonder in Our Lives*.

Mark your calendars NOW for the weekend of February 27, 28 and March 1, 2003 (a little later than usual so we could get our great hotel). We'll have all the features you have grown to love at SWUW conferences, with some fun new twists as well. The conference will be held at the breathtakingly beautiful Renaissance Arboretum Hotel in northwest Austin.

It is in a beautiful setting, and is surrounded by shopping, dining and fun activities.

Come prepared to enjoy an opening address by Nancy Franklin LMSW-ACP, LMFT, a play therapist and lecturer on the seasons of women's lives, who will set the stage for a variety of sessions for all types of interests, designed to bring out each of our hidden talents and passions--helping us each become her own "Wonder Woman." There will be sessions on art, movement, craft, writing, new ideas, self improvement, personal growth and health--and PLENTY for the maidens, as well. Our ritual teams are hard at work developing group experiences that will bring us all together for memorable times.

To learn more, visit our conference web pages at: <http://www.liveoakuu.org/swuuw.htm>

We will be updating it frequently as we move toward conference time! The women of Live Oak UU Church, Wildflower UU Church and First UU Church in Austin all look forward to seeing you!

Questions? Contact us!

Your co-conveners:

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**Janet van Sickler** 512-257-8044 or [janet@objectwatch.com](mailto:janet@objectwatch.com)

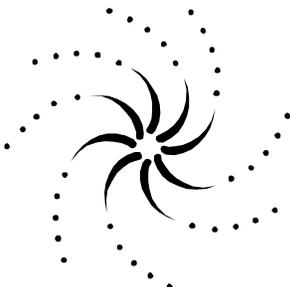
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*See Page 1 for Menu (PRESIDENT'S COLUMN)*

**SWWIRL**

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