

(whose birthday is February 14th!) as well as other members and friends with February birthdays will invite all to stay for a pasta lunch and birthday cake! Do plan to stay for the festivities! (And... you may be invited to contribute to the pasta sauces and salads!)

February 22

11-11:30 Family Yoga with Stevie Woolworth.
11:45 - 12:15 Pres. Mel Warren will address us with the State of The Congregation Meeting.
What sort of meeting is this? Very important, very informative. This is an opportunity for any and all members of the congregation to share ideas about the activities, leadership opportunities, and next directions for UUCO.
12:15, we will have a POTLUCK.

February 29

"The Whitewater Church of the River." -- Dr. Richard Creswell

"If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water," wrote physicist Loren Eiseley.

Dick Creswell, MSD past-president, is a native Southerner who loves the land and natural flora and fauna of the South -- and, especially, its rivers. Dick and his wife, Elise, are lovers and travelers and preservers of the rivers of the South. Near Macon, Georgia, they have a cabin on the Ocmulgee River, and they enjoy riding the currents of this Georgia water artery.

>>>>>>> TUPELO FELLOWSHIP <<<<<<<<

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Tupelo meets every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m. at Temple B'Nai Israel 1301 Marshall St. Tupelo. We would love to have you come over. Check out our website at UUTupelo.org

February 1

WAM'BA (We Amend Minds-By Action) started by Victoria Cummings- Bobo and her sister Dr. Ormella Cummings in 1988 , as an organization to devoted to introducing cultural activities and enrichment programs to young people and adults in Itawamba County and the surrounding area. Music and dancing.

February 15

"The Da Vinci Code" discussion led by Louise

Plondinec

>> MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP <<

The Middle School Youth Group will meet on Wednesday, January 21, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at UU Hall. At this meeting the group will talk about their goals for spring 2004---and eat pizza! In addition to regularly-scheduled fun, we plan to continue with the curriculum of Where Do I Stand? and to set up a calendar for providing child care to the congregation as needed on Sundays. Our group hopes to meet regularly on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. Questions? Please call Luanne at 234-3833.

>>>>> MIDSOUTH DISTRICT <<<<<<<<

It is a great pleasure to announce that the Mid-South District Library is now fully accessible online at the Mid-South website!! Over 161 items are available for use by our congregations -- books, RE curriculum, videos, and more!!

The online MSD Library can be reached directly at the link below:

http://www.uua.org/msd/Checkout/MSD_Library.html

** The email address for questions and other information about the MSD Library is MSDUULibrary@aol.com, an address which also welcomes feedback and suggestions about the library.

** Please note that only leaders authorized by their congregations should request materials from the library.

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta (UUCA) is celebrating its 50th anniversary from January 18 to January 25, and you are cordially invited to join us at any of the events listed on our web-site, www.uuca.org.

>>>>> FROM FINANCIAL OFFICER <<<<<<<< DON'T PANIC...WE HAVE HAD OUR SECOND CASE OF VANDALISM....but it has been solved!!!

In August 2003, someone stole a fine, stylish leather and wood office desk chair from UUHall. That incident was reported to law enforcement. The chair was never recovered.

On Sunday or Monday, January 11 or 12, a rapidly-moving vehicle did many "doughnuts" in the driveway to UUHall, destroying the nice smooth surface. To make a long story short, law enforcement made the report, the young culprits were identified and asked to fix the damage. They politely agreed to remedy the damage by Sunday, January 18.

If you learn of any such problems at UUHall, please call the sheriff's department immediately so that our property could be protected.

by AnnPhillippi

**Pledge packets have been sent out to 30
members and friends.
PLEASE RETURN THEM SOON!!**

Dear Members and Friends,

UU's typically do not like to talk about money. However, we have monthly bills to pay for our guest ministers, building maintenance, charities, etc. We have a remarkably beautiful place to call home and remarkable members and friends we meet there for fun, companionship, spiritual support, intellectual discussion, mourning, etc. Please consider all that we do when you make your pledge and return your pledge forms soon.

Thank you.

Ann Phillippi, UUCO Financial Officer

WHO WAS JUDITH SARGENT MURRAY?

Judith Sargent Murray (1751-1820) is considered America's first public champion of women's equality, female education, and economic independence. A largely self-educated writer of considerable skill, her literary career included essays, poetry and plays on these and other subjects. "Perhaps no American woman writer until Margaret Fuller equaled Murray in intellectual powers, in the breadth of genres in which she wrote, or in public recognition." Sharon H. Harris (ed.), *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray*.

Born the oldest of 8 children into an elite merchant family, Murray became a poet, essayist,

playwright, and novelist and, eventually, she would edit her husband John Murray's, autobiography before her own death in her home near Natchez, Mississippi. John Murray was the minister responsible for transporting the Universalist religion from England to America. Together the Murray's traveled the east coast and worked to establish the new religion here. Although John Murray advocated education for women and encouraged Judith to continue writing after their marriage, many of Universalism's feminist tenets spring from the mind of Judith Sargent Murray.

In her own lifetime Murray was best known for the regular column that she wrote for the *Massachusetts Magazine*. Her essays considered all the topics of the day: politics, religion, the French Revolution, manners, the role of women in society, "domestic finances," etc.. Today she is best known for her short essay "On the Equality of the Sexes" where she strongly advocated equal educational opportunities for women. Her ideas are strikingly similar to Betty Friedan's in *The Feminine Mystique*. To her, women had an intellect and "the needle and the kitchen" did not provide enough stimulation to occupy a woman's intellect. Still, the major theme of Murray's work would always be: knowledge of history is important to all people but women's knowledge of earlier women's abilities and accomplishments is the most important tool for empowering young women in the new republic.

Throughout her remarkable life, Judith Sargent Murray was an avid letter writer. A student of history, she also knew the value of leaving behind written records. And so, at the age of 23, she began to create letter books into which she made copies of her outgoing correspondence. Written to family, friends, and political figures, these 2,500 or so letters are a new eyewitness account of a pivotal time in American history. What's more, they are the only letter books we know of left behind by a woman.

At times Murray used the Pseudonyms Mr. Vigillius and Constantia. Her *Primary Works* include: *The Story of Margareta* (novel) included in "The Gleaner," *Massachusetts Magazine*, 1792-94; "The Repository," *Massachusetts Magazine*, 1792-94; *The Medium, or Virtue Triumphant*, 1795 (play); *The Traveller Returned*,

1796 (play); "Desultory thoughts upon the Utility of encouraging A degree of Self-Complacency, especially in Female Bosoms," Gentleman and Lady's Town and Country Magazine, October 22, 1784; "On the Domestic Education of Children," Massachusetts Magazine, May 1790; "On the Equality of Sexes," Massachusetts Magazine, April/May, 1790.

>>>>> PASTORAL LETTER <<<<<<

Dear friends,

Since becoming your consulting minister, I've been introduced to the wonderful work of your communications trustee, John Schuster. The website, the newsletter, the email chat list...wow! Recent newsletters have outlined work of the board and various trustees, and I am further impressed to say "wow!" It's an honor to be a part of your lives and work.

Let me begin by making a confession. My second most favorite thing in the world to do is attend church—worship services and pot lucks are wonderful, but almost as fun to me are meetings of the board, committees, task forces, and cleaning crews. I believe that church meetings are a fabulous spiritual and personal growth opportunity—much cheaper than therapy, self help books, and going on retreats or pilgrimages! You gather with several people who mostly share your core values, and who mostly you can trust; you have a shared task as organizing principle; you get to practice the inner work of awareness, acceptance, and gratitude; you get to watch how you feel, think, and act in a variety of situations; you get to try on new ways to be without too much risk; you have a chance to find and deepen friendships; you can learn things; and you may even accomplish the task---though in a process oriented volunteer organization like ours the movement toward task completion can be glacier like!

Have you figured out yet that I am about to invite you to a meeting?

I've read the draft of new bylaws, as well as the current document. We've been asked to comment on them, so here are my thoughts:

- First, what a gift of grit and love it is to write up those things—and how much easier it is to toss in

editorial comments later!

- Second, with your new meeting space about to be wrangled into manageable form, you will have much more energy in the coming years for programs—you have built it, and now they will come, and you'll find yourselves providing even more kinds of services. Implementing these services will require the planning and orchestration of individual gifts and efforts far beyond those of the board and core leadership. I wonder then—what about a bi-monthly board meeting in the coming year, with a goal of a monthly board meeting the following year? And what about a specific provision of committees to go along with the trustees for religious education, communication, membership, and Sunday Service Planning?

- Third, I am tickled to see the old idea of "nominating committee" has been expanded to "Leadership Development Committee". Such a committee could help insure that all the work doesn't fall on a few shoulders.

- Fourth, just as I was touched the first time I saw it many years ago, I am again moved by the wording of your mission statement. In troubled times I often ask myself, "What is the point?" It's so important to sanity that our lives and actions mean something, that there is some larger purpose than just survival. And your mission statement reminds me that there IS a point—to my life, to your lives—and reminds me why Unitarian Universalist community as we experience it in Oxford is a key priority for me. I think about those who sit in darkness—personal or professional dullness, discouragement or despair—and who might value and be warmed by our chalice flame of liberal religion in the deep south. I think of the truly saving grace which our faith offers, to us, and to them, and by extension to all life and our planet. Thank you for the vision in your mission statement. It has inspired me to make an offer.....

In the spirit of joyful business meetings, I'd like to volunteer to meet (sometime during my Feb 14-15 visit) with whoever was appointed at the last annual meeting to be the "nominating committee" for the selection of next year's leadership. We could brainstorm what functions a "leadership development committee" would have, and how I might help with some specific areas of leadership

while I am with you this Spring...for example, I'm thinking we might send out an interest inventory to all members and friends in order to identify and begin to train folks who want to help or help in a different arena than they are now working in. So, who are you nominating committee? And what say ye?

I welcome your thoughts and feelings. My email address is barbara@greatoccasions.org

warm regards,
Barbara Jamestone

>>>>>>> **NEW MEMBERS** <<<<<<<<<

We welcome our new members: Miquel Quayja and Gail Stratton.

THANKS TO DANIELL MATTERN!!!!!!!!!!

Do you ever wonder who is responsible for the great ads in the Oxford Eagle, the Oxford Town, and the Daily Mississippian ? The mystery is solved!! You can thank Dan Mattern!!! Those ads have caused UUHall to be visited by a lot of swell folks. Thank you, Dan!!

Ann Phillippi

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