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>>>>> **NEWS FROM THE BOARD** <<<<<<  
**News From Your Board**

**Calendar Events**

**Board Meeting, Wednesday, 11 February 2004, 6 pm, UU Hall**

**State-of-the-Congregation Meeting, 22**

**February 2004, 11 am, UU Hall, followed by a pot-luck**

**UUCO Annual Business Meeting, 17 April, UU Hall**

The Board received and approved written or oral reports from all standing Committees and approved action items (summarized here). Anyone interested in more detail should speak with the President or respective Trustee or request a report.

**Action Items:**

Consulting Minister, Spring 2004. The Mid-South District, the Board, and the Tupelo UU Group are working with Dr. Barbara Jamestone to conduct five minister-led Sunday services in the Spring (including a Saturday workshop). The Board authorized the Program Committee to pursue this opportunity.

**Building Renovation & Landscaping**

**Committee:** Our sincere thanks to Gail Stratton, Pat Miller, Eunice Benton, Laura Antonow, Ann Phillippi, and Elaine Gelbard for keeping this Committee moving forward despite lack of a Chair!

\*The Board approved funds for continuing the landscaping plan.

\*The Board approved funds to buy and install vinyl tile in the back hall, both RE rooms, and the kitchen. The tile is selected, a bid has been received, and with luck the tiles will be in place soon.

\*In light of long-standing preparations to install a hardwood floor in the main room, entrance hall, lounge, and library, the President approved purchase of hard-wood flooring. The purchase was approved without a call for a Board vote because

the total purchase was born by a member family (thank you!). The flooring is now waiting for instalation!

**Committee Activity**

**Membership Committee.**

\*Mailing lists and membership are being updated and cross referenced between the Membership and Communications Committee.

\*A new UUCO directory is in the works, so fill out the information form!

\*We have six (count 'em) new adult and two new youth members!

**Communications Committee**

\*Newsletter is published on about the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, deadlines by 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

\*Web-site now contains PDF versions of newsletters, location map, and a recent addition, the UUCO photo album. Additional photos are desired, so send them in.

\*Provisional by-laws were mailed and posted on the web-site. Get your comments in!

\* An e-mail account ([uuoxford@bellsouth.net](mailto:uuoxford@bellsouth.net)) is ours, so send in your inquiries.

**Religious Education.**

\*The infant/preschool/parents playgroup plans to get the group going on a regular basis.

\*Sunday school met on alternate Sunday mornings to a successful emphasis on creation stories.

\*Middle School Youth met on alternate Wednesday evenings. Middle Schooler's also served as babysitters for Sunday Services.

\*High School Youth group met weekly on Wednesday evenings. Gail Stratton graciously served as their sole advisor. Much appreciation to Gail!

**Finance Committee.**

\* The financial condition of the UUCO as sound.

\*Pledges for the calendar year will hopefully be prepared before tax-time.

\*A snapshot of our finances indicates we have had an average monthly income exceeding expenses for the last six months (May-Nov 2003), not including the Chalice Lighter Grant received in June.

\*We continue to maintain a six-month buffer to cover operating expenses.

\*The Board strongly encourages that all events at UU Hall include brief, respectful opportunity for

attendees to contribute.

**Program Committee.**

\*The well-attended Discussion Group is meeting monthly.

\*Lay-led Services (from the Church of the Larger Fellowship) are successful and will be a prominent part of Spring program planning

\*Community Day plans include music and yoga

\*Other special plans are being made for Martin Luther King Day (January), Symbols and Meaning of Passover (April), Flower Communion (Easter), and Earth Day.

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

We welcome the following new members:

**Susie Adams**

I grew up with a big brother, horses, chickens, ducks, and dogs in a rural area near Loomis, CA, a then-tiny town towards the Sierras from Sacramento. Since high school I have lived, worked, and studied in MN, ID, and MT, with stints of 2-4 months working or studying in OR, AK, the San Juan Islands of WA, the Channel Islands of CA, and Sri Lanka. Charles, Casey, and I moved here from Flathead Lake, MT, in 2000 for my job as a fish biologist with the US Forest Service, Southern Research Station. Sophie joined in October 2002. My parents and brother live in Oregon, and most of Charles' relatives live in New Jersey. Prior to becoming a mom and a homeowner, I spent much of my free time whitewater kayaking, backcountry skiing, hiking, and backpacking. But it was time for changes in my life, so now I have no spare time, rather spend lots of time fixing things and supervising wild children. From about 6<sup>th</sup> grade through college, I expended much energy pondering the greater questions of life and exploring eastern religions, especially Buddhism. I have been in a more worldly phase for many years now, but expect that old age will eventually bring a return to philosophizing. I came to UU more so that Casey would have a safe community within which to conduct his searches someday, if he so desires. Once here, I found a lovely and open community that was much-needed in my new home. Thank you all.

**Jordan Bankhead**

Born in Modesto, California in 1976. Attended UCLA and received a Bachelor of Arts degree with a history major and Russian language and literature minor in 1998. Attended U.C. Berkeley law school and received a Juris Doctor in 2001. Traveled and studied in Europe extensively. Moved to Oxford in summer, 2002. Enrolled in PhD program in political science at Ole Miss in the fall of 2002. Recent work experience: Partner at Mississippi Closing Services, a real estate law office here in Oxford.

**Pat Miller**

Believe it or not, I am a fifth generation Oxonian; my great-great-grandparents moved to the Oxford area in 1839. I lived away for 12 years but returned 16 years ago. Teaching biology at Northwest Mississippi Community College is my profession but my passions are studying spiders, fossil collecting and gardening. I have a son, William, who is a senior at Mississippi School for Math and Science, and it was he who introduced me to Unitarianism through the youth group. Gail, my partner of 12 years, and I are so pleased to be at "home" in the congregation. I feel blessed that I have found a group of people who share the same spiritual philosophy and have such accepting, loving hearts. Blessed be.

**Sharon Walls Martinez**

I am originally from Amory, Mississippi. I returned to Mississippi in June 2001, coming to Oxford from Kansas City to be near my daughter and grandson. I work for the University of Mississippi as an editorial assistant on an IEEE publication. I am pursuing a master's degree in journalism. I am a Reiki Master and teacher and I am the creator of the web site Road Signs for self help and personal development (<http://www.swroadsigns.com>) I have been attending UU meetings since Fall 2001. I look forward to contributing more as a member.

**Jody Webb**

I was born April 5, 1967 in Monroe, LA. I have been a teacher for 6 years and a coach for 8 years. I am, also, a practicing herbalist and a seer who enjoys the outdoors, cartoons, singing, and

intelligent conversation.

**Our First Official Youth Members:**

Daniel and Mac Warren.

Welcome to all our new members!!!

**OUTSTANDING UUCO ACCOMPLISHMENT**

We would like all to know that Bobby Davis, competing his first time this season as a Class 4 optional gymnast (means you choreograph your own routines) was the gold medalist all-around at last nights at the 5th annual Jeffrey Catcher memorial Gymnastics Invitational held at Chattanooga Tennessee.

This is a premiere fund-raiser for spinal cord injury research and supports the Christopher Reeve Foundation. Bobby and Margarete would like to acknowledge Eunice Benton and the Gelbard-Mattern family for their support and encouragement Couldn't have done it without you!!!!

See you when we get back in town.

Margarete and Bobby

**> PICTURES OF RE HANUKKAH PLAY <**



Elaine led the Sunday School group in a wonderful, impromptu Hannukah play and service last Sunday. The photos are of the Jews praying and the Jews and Greeks fighting.

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