



Historic Earth Summit Connects, Inspires

By Barbara Ford, UUMFE Chair

On January 30, 2007, an historic gathering of thirty national Unitarian Universalist leaders met to discuss the role of Environmental Justice in the faith, and to set goals for a comprehensive approach for Earth advocacy and witness. Participants included national staff and leadership from denominational groups, including UUA President Bill Sinkford, UUSC Executive Director Charlie Clements, UU Ministry for Earth's Rev. Katherine Jesch and Board Chair Barbara Ford, as well as representatives from the Earth Day Network, Legislative Ministries, the UUA Board, ministers, congregational representatives, and green building professionals.

UU Ministry for Earth was lauded for doing some of the most powerful and wide-spread grass-roots work of the denomination, as the growth of the Green Sanctuary movement has spread nationally and gained momentum. Other efforts by UUs, including work by congregations on environmental justice projects, socially responsible investment initiatives, religious education resource development, and work with youth were also cited as an important part of the network of spiritual Earth advocacy.

All participants voiced the desire for Earth concerns to be made a more central part of the faith, and advocated for stronger witness and advocacy from the UUA. Additionally, the need for a strong network of environmental leadership was cited. Brainstorming brought forth many potential projects to actualize these goals.

Since the meeting, Rev. Bill Sinkford has made public the plans for the UUA to lift up environmental justice as a priority for UU advocacy and witness, and ongoing planning will follow to discuss implementation. As with all programming, funding will need to be secured for projects, and ongoing



Earth Summit Participants

Front row l to r: Fred Small,
Rev. Katherine Jesch, Rev. Bill Sinkford
Back row l to r: Charlie Clements, Barbara Ford

planning will occur to try to secure programs that serve congregations and the wider world.

UU Ministry for Earth leadership plans to continue its longstanding advocacy for "faith in action" in service to our planet and all beings. The work of Unitarian Universalists in their congregations and in their communities is helping to build momentum for a growing, spiritually-based Earth activism. ♦



Unitarian Universalist
Ministry for Earth

Unitarian Universalist
Ministry for Earth
NEWSLETTER
is published twice a year by
UU Ministry for Earth
PO Box 11
Lyme, NH 03768.

The points of view expressed
by contributors are their own
and not necessarily those of
UU Ministry for Earth.

Subscriptions are available
through membership
in the organization.

This NEWSLETTER is printed on
100% post-consumer content
recycled paper.

ABOUT UUMFE

Unitarian Universalist
Ministry for Earth is a
nonprofit organization whose
membership
envision a world in which
all people make reverence,
gratitude, and care for the
living Earth central to their
lives.

Unitarian Universalist Minis-
try for Earth is a 501 c(3)
organization. Contributions
are tax deductible to the full
extent of the law.

UUMFE BOARD

Chair

Barbara Ford

Treasurer

Terry Wiggins

Directors

Lara Hoke

Robert Keim

Claudia Kern

Steve Maier

Ann May

Karen Urbano

Rev. Katherine

Jesch (ex officio)

Inside

- 3 **Gratitude as a Revolutionary Act**
by Barbara Ford
New National Office Opening
- 4 **Congregations Address Global Warming**
By Karen Urbano
- 5 **New Resource!**
Global Warming Action Kit Volume 2
- 6 **Springtime Relections**
By Rev. Katherine Jesch
- 8 **Hopedale UU**
Tackles Industrial Pollution
By Orie Loucks
- 9 **Secret Shoppers**
Help Environmental Justice
By Janet Fox
- 10 **UUs Flock Outdoors to Celebrate**
By Marilyn Kershner
- 11 **Cedars UUs Author Sustainability Survey**
By Claudia Kern
UUCMC Declares: A Pesticide Free Zone
- 12 **Our Food Choices**
Impact Climate Change
By Janet Heller
- 13 **Review: HEAT**
By Bruce Langmuir
- 14 **Reviews:**
Ecology of a Cracker Childhood
Good News for a Change
By Robert Keim
- 15 **Water First - Living Drop by Drop**
By Nancy Peterson
- 16 **New Partnership !**
Low Carbon Diet

REFLECTION FROM THE BOARD

Gratitude as a Revolutionary Act

By Barbara Ford, Chair, UUMFE

As the rains are finally letting up here in the Pacific Northwest, our long-awaited spring seem to be arriving, with fluffy cats dozing in the sun throughout the neighborhood, and flurries of dogwood and cherry blossoms swaying in the breeze. Springtime is a time for me of great gratitude - for the return of farmers markets, biking without multiple layers, and reconnecting with neighbors working in their yards. The reminders of regeneration and reconnection are everywhere.

Noted deep ecologist, systems theorist, and Buddhist scholar Joanna Macy describes gratitude as one of the greatest revolutionary acts we can practice. Practices of gratitude contradict the dominant message of the consumer society - Buy More, Use More, Be More. These messages perpetrate a culture of dissatisfaction and need, and are contributing greatly to the global environmental crisis through unsustainable practices. We can't help but fall into it ourselves at times, and we strive mightily as parents to teach our children not to believe the hype.

So, how do we practice gratitude? One way is to simply notice the ways we are interconnected with our world: paying attention as we eat, or walk outside, or talk with friends, and noting the thread of communion. Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh

taught that we can simply notice, for example, when we eat a piece of toast for breakfast, that we are then connected to the farmer, and the rain, and the Earth, and the truck driver, and the yeasty organisms that made the bread happen. "Imagine", he said, "that the toast is your ambassador to the Universe". If we can get to the feeling of deep connection, gratitude will always be there to support us.

One of the wonderful qualities of gratitude is that it can happen even in difficult emotional times. Those of us who acutely feel the concerns of the ailing world can turn to it at any time to ground and strengthen us for the future. It is the solid ground upon which we can firmly stand, even in the face of uncertainty about what is to come.

Right now I am grateful that in the face of our uncertainty about the future, there is a great upswell of Earth consciousness occurring that is guiding us as individuals, and as a faith. UUA President Bill Sinkford has announced this spring that environmental justice will be one of the priorities of advocacy and witness in the faith, and other faith groups are raising the call for spirited action as well. Know that, as members of UU Ministry for Earth, you are a part of a growing movement intent on changing the culture of dissatisfaction into one of sustainability and grateful interdependence. ♦

New National Office Opening!

UU Ministry for Earth will be opening a **new national office** in Portland, Oregon this summer. The new office will be housed in the Buchan Education Building at the First Unitarian Church in downtown Portland (a gold LEED certified green building!), and will accommodate the much needed growth in staff, interns, and volunteers to keep the momentum going for the Green Sanctuary program and other environmental justice works. Director of Environmental Ministry Rev. Katherine Jesch will begin working in the new space this summer, and plans for moving UUMFE office operations and communications are being developed. Given that over **ten percent of all UU congregations nationwide** are active in UUMFE programs, the UU Ministry for Earth Board voted to make a deeper commitment to the growing organization, and create a physical workspace, with the goals of increased services and efficiency.

More information about changes in address, phone, etc. will be provided soon. Of course, this decision requires an increased financial outlay – for rent, office equipment, furniture, and materials. If you or your congregation is interested in participating with a donation for this important organizational development, please contact us by email at office@uuministryforearth.org, or mail at UUMFE, PO Box 11, Lyme, NH 03768, or telephone at 301-588-0944. ♦



Congregations Address Global Warming

Congregations organize events to teach and lead and act.

By Karen Urbano, UUMFE Board

Congregations across the country are taking up the challenge of Global Warming both in congregational programs and in local events. In addition to exploring the implications of Global Warming, these activities have contributed to the implementation steps of the Statement of Conscience on the 'Treat of Global Warming/Climate Change' that was adopted at the 2006 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Many groups started the year by hosting showings of the movie "An Inconvenient Truth" from Al Gore and facilitated follow-up discussion groups. Fast-forwarding to this spring, hundreds of members of congregations helped organize and participated in local StepItUp2007 events across the nation, supporting the movement spearheaded by author and activist Bill McKibben.

At these April gatherings, signatures were collected for petitions to be sent to government officials, and photos of the educational activities and marches appear on the Stepitup2007 website. (See www.stepitup2007.org) Rev. Rebecca Booher, from Brevard, NC, shared one example of the activities. Her congregation presented the films "The Great Warming" & "Crude Impact" as part of a weeklong Kick the Carbon Habit! Series of events for StepItUp2007.

Outings, Music, Study Enhance Understanding

Through out the year, UUs put their creativity and knowledge to work for a variety of approaches to reaching out and celebrating our Earth Ministry. For example, Melinda Tuhus reported, "The Green Sanctuary Committee of Unitarian Society of New Hampshire in Hamden organized a "Wake Up the Sleeping Giant to Climate Change" event at our beloved state park of the same name." For Earth Day, others held special services urging folks to join the choir, although many are already singing the song of "Cut the Carbon Output". Partnering with other national organizations, UUMFE members have encouraged cities to become "Cool Cities" or go on a Low Carbon Diet. Many congregations have sponsored the new Northwest Earth Institute course called



StepItUp2007 Marchers - Portland, OR

Marchers walked 53 miles to the capital steps in Salem, OR to deliver the message of 'facing' Global Warming to State legislators.

"Global Warming – Changing Co2urse" and are urging members to gauge their own Carbon Footprints and work toward reducing them.

Art Celebrates and Speaks to Issues

Pat McEvoy of the UU Congregation of Saratoga Springs, NY reports that in August 2006 Bill McKibben gave a sermon entitled, "How Big Should We Be?" In connection with this, the event planners invited 30 area artists to produce works on global warming which were hung at a local gallery. The gallery was then the site of a forum led by Bill McKibben about global warming & related issues. The show, 'Our Warming World,' was in response to an essay by Mr. McKibben entitled 'What the Warming World Needs Now Is Art, Sweet Art.'

First UU Church of Portland, OR has created beautiful Prayer Flags for the Planet as a Community Art Event for Healing the Earth. Photos and complete instructions to hold such an event will be available on the completed Global Warming Action Kit, Vol.2 CD.

Action Influences Public Policy

Judy Morgan of the Wildflower UU Church of South Austin, Texas reports that they have met with state legislators' staff to talk about what Texas can do to take action on global warming. Also in Austin, five members of Wildflower UU demonstrated at a rally to oppose the building of 19 new coal-fired power plants.

GOOD NEWS

The UU Church of Boulder CO's Ecoweb group is helping their congregation collaborate with Boulder's Zero Waste program, a model program to create NO garbage and recycle or reuse everything possible. The UU Church of Davis, CA presented a draft resolution to their city council that designates April 14 to May 20 to be Climate Action Season and declaring May 21 to be Clear Air Sunday, urging all to walk or roll to church.

Advocacy Networks Focus - Global Warming

While not a congregation per se, the UU Legislative Ministry of California (an independent UU affiliate, as is UUMFE) has chosen the Threat of Global Warming, as one of their four issues this year, to help influence state and federal legislation on the subject of global warming. UULM collaborated with UUMFE to encourage congregations in California to take action on April 14 and to continue through Earth Day and beyond. UUs were urged to sign a petition asking the U.S. Congress to reduce global warming by 80% by 2050. The goal was to get at least 2050 signers among California UUs.

The UU Church in Eugene, OR has joined up with Ecumenical Ministries in Oregon to participate in a lobby day to mandate that 25% of new energy development in Oregon be renewable. According to Erik Fisher, they were successful!

Youth Reach Out

Not to leave out the children, Sandra Trutt of Community UU Church of Santa Monica wrote about their "Valentines for the Earth" several children to make signs telling why it is a good idea to put CFLs in their homes, lower the thermostat in their houses and to drive slower. They put their ideas on heart-shaped cardboard signs. They also sold CFLs and had bumper stickers for cars.

This is just a sampling of actions and events that have been happening recently among UUs to address the threat of global warming. The stories came to UUMFE through a Call For Input in preparation for a new Resource to be sold both at GA in Portland and on the UUMFE website. The Global Warming Action Kit, Volume 2 cd will include Action Ideas from other congregations, Sermons, a new Global Warming Poster and information about 'Low Carbon Diet' and the UUMFE partnership with the Empowerment Institute. Check the website in July for more information: www.uuministryforearth.org. ♦

New Resource ! **Global Warming Action Kit Volume 2**

The Global Warming Action Kit Volume 2 will be released at the UUA General Assembly 2007 in Portland, OR in June. Volume 1 of the UUMFE Global Warming Action Kit has sold like hotcakes since GA 2006 - over 260 copies! In response to this clear signal for the need for UU resources to implement the SOC on The Threat of Global Warming, UUMFE has assembled more materials in a new cd, which will also be available online and by mail order in July for just \$10.

The contents reflect the high level of activity in UU congregations this year and include:

- **Songs**, sheet music, and recordings of global warming/Earth-care songs from UU folksinger Dan Berggren and Music Director of the Chattanooga UU Congregation, Linda Pehlman; plus some zippy new lyrics to old tunes from Schenectady, NY
- A new 10-minute **play** by UU playwright Doug Stewart entitled "Final Exam"
- A complete how-to kit on staging a local global warming **art show** from UUMFE Regional Rep, Pat McEvoy and her UU Congregation of Saratoga Springs, NY.
- A guide to creating a community art event "**Prayer Flags** for the Planet" from Portland, OR
- Abundant materials from several congregations on **alternative transportation** and carpooling to church
- A sampler of Global Warming **sermons and services**, including one by the Youth of Goodloe Memorial Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Bowie, MD

And much, much more!

Nearly all the documents on both volumes of the resource are created in Microsoft Word to allow easy tailoring of the content to the needs of your congregation. The materials are already formatted with color and clip art to make your use of the contents quick and simple - **just print and act!**

Springtime Reflections

By Rev. Katherine Jesch,
Director of Environmental Ministry and
Green Sanctuary Program Coordinator

This time of year always feels a bit like the winter holidays – scrambling to make all the preparations for the end of the year, getting ready to see old friends again and to meet new ones, anticipating



Green Sanctuary Awards, GA 2006

Kay Mowrey shown receiving the Green Sanctuary certificate for the Universalist Unitarian Church in Riverside, CA from Claudia Kern, UUMFE Board and Rev. Bill Sinkford, President, UUA. Rev. Katherine Jesch is at the podium.

hearing the news of the past year and hopes and plans for the next.

Like many congregations, and the Unitarian Universalist Association itself, UU Ministry for Earth runs its business on a July to June program year. General Assembly is like the holiday season for us. Instead of planning dinner parties and open-house feasts (well, some of that, too), we're planning workshops, presentations, budgets, and business meetings. As you see in other places in this newsletter, our GA agenda is packed, and there are several special treats in store this year (Joanna Macy, for instance).

I'm looking forward to meeting or reconnecting with those of you who are able to come to Portland. I will post a schedule of times when I'll be at the UUMFE booth in case you'd like to check in with me about your Green Sanctuary progress, your environmental justice work, or just to share what's going on in your congregation.

Eye-Popping Growth of Green Sanctuary Program

The new year always encourages a bit of reflection on the past 12 months, too. For me it brings a mix of great satisfaction with a small measure of disappointment. This has been an amazing year for growth of environmental awareness, both in our churches and in the larger community. Fresh from the excitement of making that powerful commitment to respond to the threat of global warming with the 2006 Statement of Conscience on the *Threat of Global Warming/Climate Change*, we plunged into collaborative activism in the campaign to show *An Inconvenient Truth* in more than 4,000 houses of worship across the country. I lost count of how many UU churches participated, but it must have been in the hundreds!

We followed up with another campaign this spring with a day of Climate Change Action calling for an 80 percent reduction in CO₂ by 2050. I know UUs, especially Green Sanctu-

ary activists, were among the organizers of many of the 1,400 Step it Up events on April 14th. While the mainstream media mostly glossed over – or downright ignored – these events, we networked with each other on line or in alternative media outlets. I'm sure our voices will be even louder next year!

My biggest celebration is the growth of the Green Sanctuary Program and the emerging support for the program by the UUA. It won't surprise you to learn that the Green Sanctuary program continues its exponential growth. Surely we expected that. But the actual numbers are still eye-popping! As of mid-May, we have accepted 31 new candidates this year. Three more applications are on hand for review later this month and I know of half a dozen others that are

GREEN SANCTUARY

getting close. This compares with 13 new candidates last year, a growth rate of almost 250 percent! Our accreditation numbers aren't quite so impressive as last year's nineteen recognized at GA. I think it will take another year or so for all these new candidates to be ready for certificates. But so far, four candidates have been certified, three more applications are on hand, and there could be two or three more submitted by early June. We'll have a wonderful celebration at GA, for sure! As a visible reflection of UUA support, Moderator Gini Courter has told us that she will allow the Green Sanctuary certificate

Green Sanctuary Candidate growth is an eye-popping 250%.

presentation to take place in a plenary session again this year. With the reduction in plenary time because of other priorities this year, this is an especially "big deal"! Only a very few awards will be made on the plenary stage this year, so this is a great privilege. Green Sanctuary has gone mainstream!

Regional Coordinators - Our Local Connection

This phenomenal growth brings its own challenges, and I must admit I haven't met my own expectations for accomplishments this year. I'm maxed out and realize I'll have to shift my approach. My goal for next year is to develop many more volunteers to help with keeping the work moving forward.

For the last 18 months, we have been blessed with a dozen very dedicated District representatives who are acting as our front line in many of the Districts. They are able to offer support, encouragement, and resources to grass roots activists in the congregations. Not all Districts are covered, however, so there are more opportunities for you to step up in your own congregations and your extended communities. We can put you to work right away, and next year we'll be seeking a grant to offer another training retreat for our volunteers to help

you be most effective. Contact me if you're ready to "step it up".

National Environmental Justice Conference Planning Progresses

In other Big News, planning for our national environmental justice conference for next spring is well under way. We have a terrific planning team, headed up by consummate organizer Pam Sparr. This project is more challenging than we guessed at the start. We are acutely aware of how interconnected are the systems of racism, classism, human rights, and economic justice are with what we are calling oppression of the Earth. Our own understanding of these relationships keeps expanding, so we haven't yet finalized the program or logistics of the conference. When those details are more well-defined, we'll make sure you get the announcement.

Urgency, Hope and Gratitude

It surely has been an amazing year, filled with excitement and energy from working with all the fellow travelers on this journey. It's also filled with a sense of urgency about the increasing speed and intensity of climate change impacts and other disasters. I admit to a few moments of despair, but we are finally seeing more signs of hope than in previous years. For example, the UUA's support and encouragement for Earth ministry is growing. We see communities coming together in solidarity to demand new legislation and implementation of new technologies. Increasing numbers of activists are working in their congregations to change their behaviors and make new choices that are better for the Earth and each other. Critical mass, the tipping point ... something has definitely shifted this year. Sometimes I am overwhelmed with too much to do and not enough resources to work with, but mostly I'm overwhelmed with deep gratitude for all of the hard work and exciting accomplishments of everyone who is working to heal the Earth. We are blessed, indeed.

Katherine

Katherine.Jesch@uuministryforearth.org ♦

Hopedale UU Tackles Industrial Pollution

By Orié Loucks, Hopedale UU Community, Oxford, Ohio

Concerned members of the Hopedale UU Community in Oxford, Ohio have shown the way to make social and environmental justice an active part congregational life and community responsibility. The Green Sanctuary Committee and other in the congregation were successful in turning around long-standing air, soil and water contamination at an industrial site in their home county.

LONG-STANDING PROBLEM

The AK Steel facility had been known since its inception as a major source of gaseous pollutants, particulates (soot), and toxic runoff into Dick's Creek, a nearby stream. Between 2003 and 2005, the Green Sanctuary Committee of the Hopedale UU Community of Butler County, Ohio sought to have the steel company, based in Middletown, OH, recognize the social injustice from its failure to control air pollution problems at the plant, just east of Oxford and Hamilton. Modest corrective steps had been taken some years ago, but no control measures or clean-up were being discussed recently.

UUs use a 'multi-media' approach to bring change to a long-standing contamination problem.

COMMUNITY COALITION

Over time, three local environmental groups, Environmental Community Action (ECO), Ohio Citizen Action, and the local Sierra Club had organized a campaign to persuade AK Steel to install pollution controls and remove local off-site risks. After Hopedale member, and Middletown resident, **Christine Parker**, appeared at a hearing regarding extension of AK's deep-well injection permit for hazardous liquid wastes, HUUC joined in the pollution abatement effort with a focus on the long-standing PCB contamination of Dick's Creek adjacent to the Amanda Elementary School.

Parker, a former music professor, solicited help from others on the HUUC Green Sanctuary Committee - **Ann Geddes** and others of the Oxford area responded. Hopedale members participated in strategy sessions at three EPA hearings in Middletown (on one occasion comments were chosen for broadcast on commercial TV), and provided support for a mail campaign. An uncountable number of letters went to then AK President, Richard Wardrop.

INFORMING THE CONGREGATION

Orié Loucks, along with Parker, arranged for the Green Sanctuary Committee to offer a HUUC Sunday service, April 18, 2004. Long-time Middletown activists Ray Agee and Kim Coombs told about AK Steel issues in their community, and the convoluted route necessary for communications with the steel company. Shortly afterward, and with hundreds of letters having been sent, the activists' work contributed to the termination of AK President Richard Wardrop and the installation of a new CEO, James Wainscott, with apparent instructions from the Board of Directors to improve community relationships. The Middletown activists, including Parker then attended and spoke at an AK Board of Directors/Stockholders meeting in Chicago, led by the new CEO, where they began a new relationship.

SUCSESSES AND MORE TO COME

With the new CEO in place, a series of positive outcomes took shape. First, AK installed a chain link fence to limit exposure of the Amanda School children to the PCB contamination in Dick's Creek, and site remediation is underway. Secondly, CEO Wainscott has visited in the home of Ray Agee along with representatives of the Sierra Club, ECO, and others living near the mill. Thirdly, \$55 million is being spent to clean up AK's manufacturing processes with a goal of reducing particulate emissions, improving health, and restoring visibility. More recently, and separate from the AK Steel problem, Chris Parker has developed and led on-site gardening exercises for the students at Amanda School, introducing these children to the concept of social justice and to the hope that comes with sharing a vision of environmental recovery and implementing that vision. ♦

GREEN SANCTUARY



Secret Shoppers Help Environmental Justice

by Janet Fox, Cedar Lane UU Church in Bethesda, MD

“Sand it. You gotta make the paint stick,” a clerk at a paint store told us with confidence when we asked how to deal with chipping paint on the door to a kid’s room in an old house. When we read him the label on the paint can warning against sanding because it would generate lead dust, he maintained his position. He held fast even after we asked him about the risk of brain damage to our child or safer alternatives. While this exchange was extreme, it reflects the careless approach some paint and hardware stores take with regard to their customer’s health.

As part of Green Sanctuary work, members from [Cedar Lane UU Church](#) (Bethesda, MD) Environmental Task Force, partnering with the [National Center for Healthy Housing](#), and [Improving Kids' Environment](#), developed the [Healthy Stores](#) project. This environmental justice effort focuses on paint, pesticides, furnace filters and safety alarms, as well as the advice given to customers about their proper use.

The **Healthy Stores** Project depends on volunteer secret shoppers to check stores for product availability, as well as advice that sales clerks give to customers. Results are shared with stores, so they can improve. The project is currently in progress in the D.C. region, but could easily be duplicated in other areas. Complete background information, on-line survey forms, and project contact information is at www.healthyhomestraining.org/Retail/DC.htm.

The **Healthy Stores** project has evaluated environmental justice guidelines and applied them to the development of this very important work. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, culture, education, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and en-

forcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

The following is a summary of their findings. More information can be found at the **Healthy Stores** website.

Minorities Spending on Home Renovations: Painting is an element of many renovations. From 1995-2001, minority households accounted for around 60 percent of the total increase in spending on home improvements, with the Hispanic community increasing spending almost 80 percent. The **Healthy Stores** Project is designed to ensure that retail hardware and paint stores provide better advice to their customers.

Lead poisoning: Lead-based paint is the dominate source of the lead dust that poisons. Home improvement is a significant source of the lead dusts. The **Healthy Stores** Project is designed to getting better advice to people planning to paint existing homes.

Asthma: Poverty, substandard housing that results in increased exposure to certain indoor allergens, lack of education, inadequate access to health care, and the failure to take appropriate medications

*Minority children are
8 times more likely
to be lead poisoned.*

may all contribute to the risk of having a severe asthma attack or, more tragically, of dying from asthma. Furnace filters and pest control help reduce indoor allergens that trigger asthma attacks. The **Healthy Stores** Project is focused on getting better furnace filters into homes and using safer and more effective cockroach control.

Rats: 9,800 people have rat bites each year. Rats are a greater problem in inner city and low-income neighborhoods. The **Healthy Stores** Project is designed to get better rodent control and safer use of rat poisons.

The bottom line is that getting better products and advice from retail hardware and paint stores will benefit all customers. But low income and minority residents are more likely to benefit more because they suffer more from the diseases and are increasing their investment in renovations, especially do-it-yourself work. ♦

Birds and Brunch **UUs Flock Outdoors to Celebrate**

by Marilyn Kershner,
UU Fellowship of Gainesville, FL

The Gainesville, Florida UU Ministry for Earth group (GUUME) planned for a group and hosted a crowd when they launched the program year in January. Over 50 Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (UUF) members and friends gathered for the **Birds and Brunch** nature outing at nearby Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park. The weather and wildlife cooperated beautifully and the hikers were able to experience 25 species of birds (including sandhill cranes, bald eagles, white pelicans, marsh and red-shouldered hawks) plus buffalos, wild horses and white-tailed deer.

Rev. LoraKim Joyner shared stories of the significance of the crane in various cultures, how the peace crane came to be, and distributed a new UUF brochure, "**Liberating Wings**" which discusses birding as a spiritual practice. The

GUUME group hopes to make this a New Year's tradition for the Fellowship. The Green Team provided the brunch, and were very happily surprised in the large number of people who participated in the outing.

While showing the UUF band of birders the eagle's nest near the front door of the visitor's center at Paynes Prairie State Park, Marilyn Kershner shared her favorite armchair birding pastime - the **Eagle Cam** - on the Audubon of Florida website.

The eagle's nest is in a resort community in Port St. Lucie on the east coast of Florida. The developer has joined with Audubon and Friends of Eagles to sponsor two webcams in the adjacent tree which offer live video during daylight hours. The eagles have used this nest for four years. The eggs that the pair tended for weeks did not hatch - probably infertile. However, January was early in the season and



everyone hoped the eagles would try again. Alas, they did not, so we will tune in again next year.

Visit www.audubonofflorida.org and select the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey link or the Eagle Cam link on the home page. Be forewarned - this website can be habit-forming! ♦

Global Warming - One Year Later . . . Food for Thought



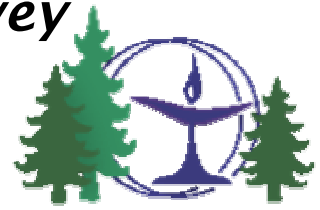
June 20-24 + June 25th

Join UUMFE in Portland, OR at the UUA General Assembly 2007 for workshops, speakers, and awards, *plus* the fantastic opportunity for an all-day workshop with renowned author Joanna Macy.

Meet UUMFE Board members at the Booth in the Exhibit Hall, plus purchase worship, education and action materials. ♦

Cedars UUs Author Sustainability Survey

Our Ecological Footprint – An Environmental Assessment and Survey



by Claudia Kern, UUMFE Board

The Cedars UU Church of Bainbridge Island, Washington has no church building; so as part of their Green Sanctuary work last fall they asked their members to complete a personal environmental assessment that they posted on the web using a free tool called SurveyMonkey.com.

A groundswell amounting to 42% of the 150-member congregation elected to complete the survey during the 8-week period it was open at SurveyMonkey. The Green Sanctuary Committee wrote and administered the 83-question survey, which identified environmental and sustainability issues that the individuals can affect in their own lives. 72 individuals responded to parts of the survey, and 63 completed all questions and provided an email address to receive a summary of results.

The individuals who took the survey were entered into a drawing for prizes which included 3 DVDs of “An Inconvenient Truth,” a set of eight compact fluorescent bulbs, and gift passes to the movies at a local movie house.

SIX ISSUES topped the list of topics that Cedars members would like to learn more about:

1. Doing a home **energy audit** (27);
2. Installing **solar hot-water panels** (21);
3. Installing **photo-voltaic solar electric panels** (19);
4. Renovations that maximize **passive solar energy** (15);
5. **Replacing gas or fuel oil heaters** with efficient electrical heat pumps (15); and
6. In the “**Earth Justice**” category, three topics were nearly tied: how to identify and avoid shopping at businesses that either
Violate fair labor practices,
Are careless with worker safety, or
Have a record of harm to the environment.

Through the generosity of the folks at Cedars UU, this assessment tool is now available on the UU Ministry for Earth website at:

http://uuministryforearth.org/files/CedarsUU_GSAudit.pdf



Earth Window
At UUCMC

UUCMC Declares: A Pesticide Free Zone

The UU Congregation of Monmouth County has declared their meeting house and grounds as a Pesticide Free Zone. The congregation is committed to protecting the health and safety of all who use their building and/or grounds. Pesticides are just one category of substances that can increase the risk of cancer, asthma, immune system and nerve disorder, infertility, birth defects, learning disabilities and behavioral problems.

The newly installed ladybug Pesticide Free Zone signs at UUCMC mean that no pesticides are used on the grounds and that Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices are used in their building. IPM controls pests with traps, baits, proper sanitation and physical barriers such as caulking. Chemical pesticides are considered only in extreme circumstances, in which case users of the building would be informed. Currently no pesticides are used anywhere on the Meeting House property.

To broaden this commitment the congregation also provides its members with contact information about local organic lawn services and how to maintain a pesticide free lawn, garden, building or work place. ♦

REVIEWS

Our Food Choices Impact Climate Change

Six Arguments for a Greener Diet

By Dr. Michael F. Jacobson

Livestock's Long Shadow - Environmental issues and options.

By H. Steinfeld, P. Gerber, T. Wassenaar, V. Castel, M. Rosales, C. de Haan

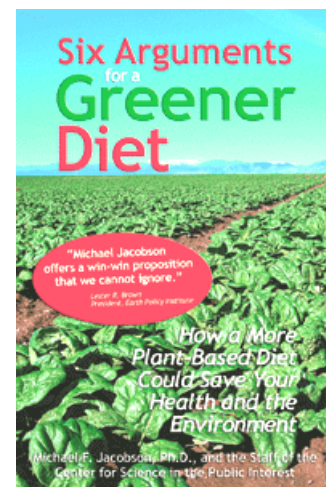
Reviewed by Janet Heller, UU Society: East, Manchester, CT

It started with a small article in the food section of our local paper about a new book, Six Arguments for a Greener Diet, by Dr. Michael F. Jacobson and the Center for Science in the Public Interest. That gave me an idea: the Sustainable Living Potluck and Program our Green Sanctuary committee was planning could use a food information table. With the help of a vegan member of our church, UU Society: East in Manchester, CT, we put together a food quiz, articles about the environmental effects of eating meat, and the value of local organic food. We gathered used vegetarian cookbooks and made copies of good recipes. Then, we advertised the potluck as “vegetarian and vegan dishes especially welcome,” since we did not want to completely turn away meat eaters.

In the discussion that followed a film about global warming, an attendee mentioned a recent UN report, “Livestock’s Long Shadow.” His comment, “eating one hamburger adds as much to global warming as two weeks of driving a car”, shocked and surprised most of us. I decided to follow this up after the program. You know, “Just the facts, m’am.”

The first article I read, “Cattle raised for beef cause more damage to the planet than emissions from cars”, by Ben Cage, highlights many issues in the UN report. His Executive Summary states: “Livestock’s contribution to environmental problems is on a massive scale and its potential contribution to their solution is equally large. The impact is so significant that it needs to be addressed with urgency. Major reductions in impact could be achieved at reasonable cost.”

Details from the 408-page report include troubling facts about methane and nitrous oxide, both significant greenhouse gases, and both produced by livestock through their digestion and manure, and worsened by grain-based diets and intensified methods of raising these animals. And, this in addition to the CO2 livestock contribute! The report concludes, “**Livestock’s contribution [to climate change] is enormous...about 18 % of the global warming effect – an even larger contribution than the transportation sector worldwide.**” The report provides numerous ideas to change and improve business practices - more sustainable practices, re-



RESOURCES

ducing livestock production, and stressing health benefits associated with less animal protein where it is overused.

Though I never found that direct connection between eating and driving, I shared this information on the Greensanctuary listserve, and some of us began to discuss vegetarianism as an aid to easing our impact on global warming. One idea that multiple congregations are doing is promoting organic vegetable gardening involving young people; some already had community garden and CSA programs. At UUS:E our RE curriculum for the past four years included planting, caring for, and harvesting an organic vegetable garden. Kids and adults got a tremendous pleasure out of this program, and we believe many are learning about plant-based foods, keeping our food fresh and local, and caring for and being connected with the earth and nature.

So what is an ethical UU to do? I highly recommend the article in the recent UU World, "Eating Ethically". Additionally I suggest [Six Arguments for a Greener Diet](#) for its readable, colorful, fact filled, and thoughtful look at food issues from every side. If we **are** concerned about climate change and finding positive ways to heal our planet, we cannot ignore the impact of eating meat. Along with curbing our "carbs" by driving less, using CFLs, conserving heat and electricity, moving to renewable energy and green building, and working for public policy changes, it certainly seems clear that moving towards a vegetarian or vegan diet can be a huge step in reducing global warming gases and environmental destruction. Growing our own and/or buying local organic or sustainably grown food, and encouraging others to do the same is not only better for our health and more humane for the animals whose products we do eat, but it is also essential to environmental healing and reducing global warming. ♦

HEAT: How To Stop The Planet From Burning *by George Monbiot*

*Reviewed by Bruce Langmuir,
UUMFE Regional Coordinator, Mass Bay District
First Parish of Sudbury UU, MA*

Is changing light bulbs to CFLs, driving a real hybrid car like a Prius, turning the thermostat down a few degrees, plus adding some insulation to your home, going to be enough to mitigate our global warming problems?? Absolutely NOT!

Most think that what we all need to do to slow down global warming/climate change is adequately covered in and at the end of Al Gore's film "An Inconvenient Truth" (and in most other articles on the subject). I have thought much about how our lifestyles will need to change and will be forced to change in what should be the near future. For me, I continue to realize more and more how significant this all has become, and I have difficulty in getting this across to most other persons. They nod and say they understand, but their remarks clearly indicate to me they do not understand. I think this goes for most.

Perhaps the book "Heat: How to stop the planet from burning" will get the point across. The book review on www.alternet.org may assist. The following is an excerpt of the review by David Norris:

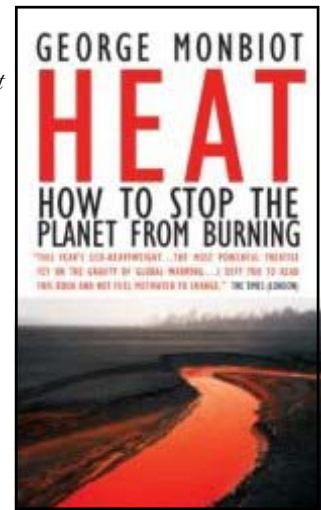
"George Monbiot's new book "Heat: How to stop the planet from burning" (Doubleday, 2006) picks up where Al Gore left off on global warming, offering real solutions without sugar-coating the large personal sacrifices they will require by us all. - "Heat" is a remarkable book. For it is not written to convince the unconvinced global warming, but to educate the already-persuaded, those who exited the theater after watching "An Inconvenient Truth" with fire in their bellies, ready to fight the incoming menace about what must be done, and ready to face the significant sacrifices that will have to be made along the way."

"Heat" is reviewed by David Norris, in "What Al Gore Hasn't Told You About Global Warming", January 9, 2007.

To read the full review, access one of the two following Internet addresses:

<http://www.alternet.org/envirohealth/46318/>

http://www.truthout.org/issues_06/010907EB.shtml ♦



RESOURCES

REVIEWS

Ecology of a Cracker Childhood by Janisse Ray

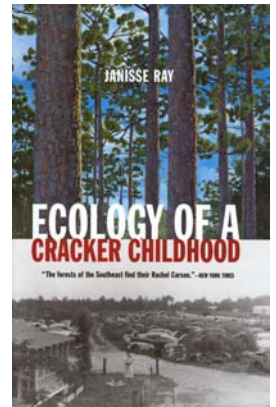
Reviewed by Robert Keim, UUMFE Board Member

"In a junkyard as in wilderness there is danger: shards of glass, leaning jacks, weak chains; or rattlesnakes, avalanches, polar bears. In one as in the other you expect the creativity of the random, how the twisted metal protrudes like limbs, the cars dumped at acute, right, and obtuse angles, how the driveways are creeks and rivers."

Okay, I confess. If you go back in Janisse Ray's family tree (which was included in her book), there is a last name that our ancestral lines share – and both of us being descendants of folk who made a living in the piney woods of southern Georgia, well who knows. But no, that's not my reason for falling for ***Ecology of a Cracker Childhood***. In this work, Ms. Ray, a poet and environmental activist, takes a tough-minded look at life in rural southern Georgia, blending memoir and nature study. Interspersed with detailed observations of her family members are chapters describing the beauty of longleaf pine flatwoods and other natural treasures found in her homeland. The scenes of family struggles resonate in the naturalist's visions, evoking the calm of the landscape and an escape from the anger and pain that drives her family. It almost seems like a peculiarly southern story, one made more so by her rootedness in the land:

"We Southerners are a people fighting again for our country, defending the last remaining stands of real forest. Although we love to frolic, the time has come to fight. We must fight. What is left is not enough. When we say the South will rise again we can mean that we will allow the cutover forests to return to their former grandeur and pine plantations to grow wild. The whippoorwill is calling from the edge."

May the longleaf pines that once defined this part of the world be sources of hope and dreams; may you read ***Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*** and be transformed by this junkyard escapee. ♦



Good News for a Change by David Suzuki and Holly Dressel

Reviewed by Robert Keim, UUMFE Board Member

The litany of environmental bad news — rapid extinction of species, pollution, depleted food sources — can be overwhelming, but there's hope too. In ***Good News For A Change***, a thoughtful look at what's happening behind the sometimes-grim headlines, authors David Suzuki and Holly Dressel show that thousands of individuals, groups, and businesses are already changing their ways. They highlight the growing number of profitable companies with a positive presence in their communities, activists and Third World villages practicing true participatory democracy, farmers and ranchers sharing their land with other species — even some governments, local and national, basing economic development on an eco-friendly model. The technologies needed to make a better world, say the authors, are already within reach — and being used.

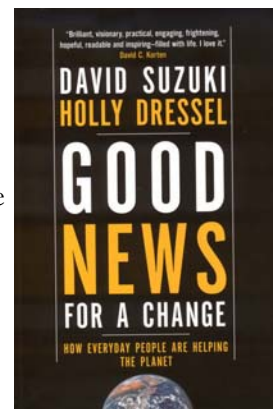
This practical, inspiring guide to saving the planet is based on the true stories of ordinary people who are doing it every day. Like Judy Wick's *White Dog Café* in Philadelphia,

"...which grosses over \$5 million a year, and performs every kind of social and environmental outreach imaginable, functioning more like a foundation than a business."

Or Mervyn Wilkinson, an 88-year-old owner of Wildwood, 137 acres of old growth forest on Vancouver Island. Mr. Wilkinson decided he wanted to establish a rate of harvest that would sustain the integrity of the forest — and has held to that principle since 1945.

As a result, *"He's taken almost two-and-a-half times of his forest's original volume in his long life — and still has 10 percent more wood on it than when he started. He has provided full and partial employment to 26 people, all on his little forest. And he could keep doing it forever."*

Such portraits remind us that it is not necessary to separate business objectives from environmental concerns; that, quite the contrary, it is not only possible to integrate the two — that it's happening around the world. They also remind us that hope is essential to those who dream of helping Planet Earth. ♦



RESOURCES

WATER FIRST - Living Drop by Drop

By Nancy Peterson, First Unitarian
Society of Schenectady, NY

Environmental Justice—the right to clean water-- was the theme for an evening hosted by and the Green Sanctuary Committee of the First Unitarian Society of Schenectady and the Schenectady County League of Women Voters. The purpose of the program was to raise awareness of how the lack of adequate water supply can impact lives in developing countries. Water scarcity, interacting with other factors, leads to and sustains poverty.

The event began with a screening of the film ***WATER FIRST—Living Drop by Drop***, a short documentary film that was shot in Malawi and South Africa. The film documents how water issues intersect with issues of poverty, education, health and the lives of women and girls. Water shortages are now at crisis levels in many parts of the world with far reaching consequences.

A well drilling project in Malawi was one of the examples featured in the film, highlighting a very successful project spearheaded by one dedicated individual who, with only limited funding and no government support, is devoting his life to helping his countrymen. The film also chronicled protests against forced privatization of water in a poor township in South Africa, where the government shows a lack of concern for the negative impacts of privatization of a life-sustaining resource.

Amy Hart, the producer of the film was present for the showing. She spoke movingly of her ex-



periences filming in Africa and her film spoke thousands of words more. She uses film as a means of raising awareness and putting a human face to pressing global issues - especially those that affect women and children. Hart currently works with the School of Public Health at SUNYA and is happy to host fundraising events to fund well drilling projects in Malawi. The short version of the film, which was shown during this program, won 2nd place at the IV World Water Forum in Mexico City out of 300 films submitted. She is currently working on a feature length version of *Water First*.

A second objective of the evening was to inform the public of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals for reducing poverty by 2015. Vanessa Fajans-Turner of the United Nations Millennium Campaign led this part of the post-film discussion. She works closely with civil society initiatives around the world in both the global North and South to build political will for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This powerful anti-poverty campaign is a unique global partnership of the UN with NGOs, trade unions, faith groups, local authorities and the media calling for greater account-

ability from Governments in the fight against hunger, disease and illiteracy.

The growing realization that many problems-- such as health, poverty, environmental pollution--cross national borders and need to be addressed collaboratively led to agreement on Millennium Development Goal, signed in 2000 by 189 UN delegates. Goals include women's rights, education, as well as

Water scarcity, interacting with other factors, leads to and sustains poverty

eradication of extreme poverty, decreasing infant mortality, addressing AIDS/HIV and other improvements. Reaching the goals by 2015 is still possible, Fajans-Turner believes, but many countries lack the political will to make the changes. The international aid goal agreed to by the developing nations was 0.7% of GNP. In 2007 the U.S. is contributing 0.22% of GNP to aid—and most of that is in the form of military funding to Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Egypt and Columbia. In contrast, the EU countries are close to reaching the 0.7% goal.

The League of Women Voters Education Fund and The Millennium Campaign funded this environmental justice event. ♦



UU Ministry for Earth
PO Box 11
Lyme, NH 03768

office@uuministryforearth.org
301-588-0944

Low Carbon Diet

A 30 Day Program to Lose 5000 Pounds

Put Your Congregation on a Low Carbon Diet !

Wondering how your congregation can take a more active role in stopping climate change?
Go on a Low Carbon Diet !

UUMFE is excited to announce a new partnership with the **Low Carbon Diet** Initiative. The program centers around the **Low Carbon Diet** workbook—a fun, illustrated CO₂-reduction handbook that guides you through a series of 22 action steps to trim your carbon footprint and help others do the same.

What makes it such a great fit for use in UU congregations is that the program is designed to be done as a group. Congregations can host a “Global Warming Café” workshop to introduce this easy-to-follow carbon reduction program. Those who are interested can then divide up into small “EcoTeams” to support one another in following through on their **Low Carbon Diet** commitment. Meeting guides are contained in the book.

To get your kids or grandkids involved, consider the children’s version of the program called ***Journey for the Planet***. As an added bonus, with our new partnership, UUMFE will receive a donation for each copy of the workbook purchased.

For more information or to order a copy of the book, visit www.uuministryforearth.org and click on the ***Low Carbon Diet*** logo. ♦

This twice-annual Newsletter is a benefit of membership. If you have not already done so, please renew as soon as possible.