



The El Paso NUUsletter

MARCH 2010

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THE UU SPIRIT

Anna R. Mattersdorff

Due to the Mayor/First Lady's Conference for Women on Feb 19 & 20, of which Anna is Co-Chair, this column will return next month. A large group of CYRE students and teachers attended the conference.

Can You Feel It?

Every New Year we resolve to uphold our promises to be better people, more disciplined, kinder human beings. With only two months into 2010, that energy, resolve and enthusiasm is at the heart of this Community, pulsating a strong beat and consistent rhythm that keeps this faith alive and well.

Can you feel it?

Beginning with the board of trustees and program council, their optimism filled the air at the winter retreat as they established goals and set timelines to fulfill their commitments to this and the broader El Paso Community with the following:

UUCEP commitments:

- Reinstate Circle Suppers
- Establish a warm and welcoming atmosphere for guests
- Continue our Welcoming Congregation Program
- Support for CYRE
- Initiate beginning steps for UU Minister
- Course in Miracles discussion group (covenant group)

Can you feel it?

Social Justice for El Paso community:

- Community Garden at Casa Vides
- Annunciation House Meals
- Animal Rescue League visits for youth
- Services for inmates at La Tuna
- Work in the Colonias
- Hospitality for Pastors for Peace, Oasis Center, and other groups doing pilgrimages on the border.

Can you feel it?

These are only a few of the many offerings UUCEP provides our members and the community of El Paso. As we begin to march into the year, may our resolve and commitment to our principles be the light we carry with us throughout the ups and downs of 2010!

Blessings for a bright and productive year,

Janet Kincaid



March 7th:

Growing Old in America: A Historical Perspective

Presented by Carl Jackson

March 14th:

Can Machines Think? (A meditation on naturalism.)

Presented by Joseph Knapka

We may think we know what “thinking” is. If we think about it, though, we find the notion of thought is not as cut-and-dried as we think. This meditation on computation as a ubiquitous natural phenomenon might prompt us to think again.

March 21st:

A Spiritual Perspective on Civil Rights for Gays and Lesbians

Presented by The Welcoming Congregation Committee

Please join our special guest speakers Jonathan Kennedy and Angi Lugo.

March 28th:

Emerson

Presented by Sandhi Scott



SERVICE AUCTION

APRIL 17, 2010

Details will be forthcoming in the upcoming weeks. Watch for details in your Order of Service and in emails.

...And service is its prayer.

Recycling at the Community:

El Paso recycles not only paper, but also cardboard, junk mail, plastic containers, cans, and aluminum foil. We don't have a recycling pickup at the church, but there are members willing to take stuff home to recycle; so when we have church events, like the pot luck luncheons, please set aside recyclables (that includes the disposable foil baking pans and the plastic cookie or raw veggie trays). Thanks.

Special Message from Ginger:

Events taking place at UUCEP will be listed on the calendar when a room reservation (Building Usage Form 1-A) has been made through the office. Forms are available in the hutch outside the office. Forms need to be submitted 30 days before the event. Anytime you move, change your phone number, or your email address, please let Ginger, our office administrator, know so that she can update our church records. Just send her an email at uucep@uuelpaso.org with the information.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE & RECEIVE SERVICE

If you have concerns for yourself or for others or need a ride, please call 562-4001.

Food Bank: Clear box with a blue lid next to the Sanctuary information table. Food is donated to the Missouri Street Shelter.

Chalice Lighting, Flowers & Music: For opportunities to help with Sunday morning programs, please call 562-4001.

Recycling at the Community:

Please look before you put garbage in a container at the Community. The blue container with the swinging lid is for recycling only. There have been times when we were unable to recycle due to garbage in the container.

Address Changes:

Anytime you move, change your phone number or your email address, please let Ginger, our office administrator, know, so she can update our records and the directory. Just send her an email: UUCEP@UUELPASO.ORG

Volunteers Needed:

We need volunteers to help with Sunday Services. There is a sign-up sheet, to bring snacks, on the table next to the double doors in the sanctuary. People are also needed for set-up and clean-up.

Please contact Mary Walsh with any questions or if training is needed to perform these tasks. Her phone number is 526-6469.

Orders of Service and Bulletin

Announcements need to be to Ginger no later than Wednesday of that week. 915-562-4001 or uucep@uuelpaso.org

Please remember to observe the 20-minute rule (No community business the first 20 minutes after service ends). Please use this time to greet our visitors.

This congregation welcomes the participation of all members, friends and visitors without regard to race, class, national origin, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression.



Won't you be our neighbor?

Next month Ronna Kelly will start a column on members and friends of the Community. She will interview (over the phone) individuals and families to find out info that may interest others and help them know our congregants a little better. A sign-up list will be available for those interested in being interviewed.



Co-Treasurer /Personnel: Pat White

Our family came to UUCEP in the fall of 1973 and joined the following spring (we filled out a pledge card so why not sign a membership card). Our sons, Scott and Brent, grew up in the Community. Soon after we joined, I was talked into teaching RE classes and then became RE chairman. Since then I have taught RE classes, worked with finances including fund raising and pledge drives, been treasurer several times and was president twice (from 1988 – 1991 and 1998 – 2001). UUCEP has been an important part of our life.



President Elect: Ann Singer

Ann is retired and has lived in El Paso twice for a total of 33 years. She was a charter member of UUCEP. She has served on the finance committee, chaired the caring committee, as well as served as president, previously. She looks forward to supporting Janet in her presidency. After this next three-year stint on the board, she does not intend to ever run for any elected office again. Ann lives with a sometimes housemate, Willa Douglass, and three cats.

From The Lavender Room A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words

Invite a few friends or grab your significant other; pop some popcorn and pull up a chair. I have some suggestions for movies with gay, lesbian, bi and transgender themes.

I will start with lesbian films.

1. *Salmonberries*: drama-starring k.d.lang
2. *Fire*: movie about the forbidden love of two women
3. *The Off Season*: set in resort town of Cape May, NJ, during the winter
4. *If These Walls Could Talk*: (2000)-Sharon Stone and Ellen Degeneres

Now for the men.

1. *Love! Valor! Compassion!* : with Jason Alexander (George, on Seinfeld)
2. *To Wong Fuu, Thanks For Everything*: Julie Newmar, Patrick Swayze and Wesley Snipes in drag, hilarious!

And one bi related film.

- *Kissing Jessica Stein*

If you have some other suggestions movies for following newsletters please email me at Smilingmoon10@att.net or call me at 915-759-0244.



A Seasoned Sister,
Ronna Kelley

Denominational Affairs Mountain Desert District (MDD) Office:

District Executive: Rev Nancy Bowen executive@mdduua.org

2242 S Albion Street Denver, CO 80222

(303) 756-1378/ (303) 756-1407 FAX



On April 7-8, 2010, First Universalist Church of Denver, CO will host "Where Do We Come From? A UU History Workshop." On April 16-17, 2010, First Unitarian Albuquerque, NM will host "Caring Congregations: Mental Health & People of Faith." For more information on either of these workshops, contact: programconsultant@mdduua.org This year's UUA General Assembly will be June 23-27, 2010 in Minneapolis, MN.

The Russell Lockwood Leadership School will be August 1-7, 2010 in Loveland, CO.

See the MDD website at <http://mdduua.org> for more information. Check out the UUA homepage for some interesting new sites and email lists: <http://www.uua.org>



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY OF EL PASO TEXAS
 UPDATES AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION



The Board of Trustees will meet in the Sanctuary the third Sunday of each month after the Service. Regular meetings are open meetings with no set agenda. Members and friends of UUCEP are invited to attend and present matters for consideration by the Board.

Do You Want to Know What's Going On?

Copies of the minutes from Congregation & Board Meetings are posted on the door between the middle hallway & Fellowship room. Reading these minutes is a good way to keep up with what is happening in our Community.



The Program Council Committee Chairs meet the 2nd Sunday of each month at 12 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

These meetings are open to everyone wishing to be more active in our community.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!

Our choir is always open to new members, no audition required. Adult choir meets at 7:00 PM on Monday evenings, childcare provided. Vocalists and instrumentalists desiring to perform solo at Sunday services are welcome, too.



Music Director: **Stanley Ross**

Contact information: 915- 845-5847 or e-mail at rossstudios79912@yahoo.com

Administration & Finance Updates:

The Finance Committee Chair is still vacant! To volunteer for this position, please contact Aurolyn Luykx Nominating Committee Chair.

Pledge Drive: Currently, we have 45 pledges totaling \$61,578. Anyone who hasn't yet turned in their pledge card or would like to increase their pledge, please see Carol Irwin or Pat White.

On-going fundraisers: The Albertsons card is easy to use. Just give it to the clerk to scan when you checkout. We receive 1% of what you spend each month. If you don't yet have a card or know someone who would like one, see Carol Irwin or Pat White.

We are also selling our UUCEP t-shirts & cookbooks on Sunday. The t-shirts are \$15 for adult sizes and \$10 for children's sizes. We have 1 cookbook left at \$10.



Camp Thunderbird

Save the Dates!

Our annual family camp will be held Thursday, July 1 – Tuesday, July 6 this year. Save the dates and get your leave requests in early so that you can join us for a wonderful time in the cool Gila Mountains.

Brochures with more information will be out the end of March.

“A COURSE IN MIRACLES” STUDY GROUP

A new group has started at UUCEP! Our purpose is to learn a more peaceful, compassionate and meaningful way of living our lives. Our guide is *A Course In Miracles*. Our hope is that we can support and facilitate each other's growth. We are open to anyone who wants to attend. We meet at 7pm at the Crane House every 2 weeks. For those of you not familiar with ACIM, feel free to contact Sonia Galindo selindo@gmail.com, or visit www.acim.org to find out more. Please check the order of service for dates or contact Sonia.



*Before Enlightenment haul rocks, carry water.
 After Enlightenment haul rocks, carry water.*

-Buddhist saying.

Membership Committee Chair: **Alex Ceely**

If **YOU** are interested in membership in this Community, please ask the greeter for a membership application. After completing the form, please put it in the offering basket or give it to a greeter at the end of the service.

The Membership Committee meets every other second Sunday, 30 minutes after the service. All are welcome to attend. If you need a new nametag, please see a greeter on Sunday morning. You do not have to be a member to wear a nametag.

Interested in getting to know us?

If you have been visiting and feel that you would like to get to know us better, please fill out one of the light green Welcome Guest!/Visitor Cards found in the packet that a greeter can get for you. The packets are located at the entrance to the hall on the shelves. Please ask for one, fill it out and place it in the offering basket or give it to one of the greeters at the end of the service. Remember that you do not have to be a member to wear a nametag, so if you would like one, be sure to let us know.



UU Social Justice:

There are three new updates regarding Social Justice and colonias, electrical, and water issues:

Hueco Tanks Colonia: The family in the Hueco Tanks colonia used the \$200 social justice funds to purchase the necessary electrical wire, lighting fixtures, electrical outlets, and so on and asked a contractor friend of theirs to help them with the installation. As of early February, the entire ceiling and wall electrical work is done, and they were able to install the rest of the previously donated insulation into the ceiling of their home. This is wonderful news for a long-term project finally fulfilled, and has provided interior lighting for each of the rooms in their home. The family of four has delivered their message to UUCEP and the social justice efforts as, "Thank you, thank you so much for the help! We are so grateful for the money to help us finish this project on our home!"

Shawn's electricity: After numerous attempts to get hold of the owner of Coefficient Electric, we were finally able to catch him in his office and speak at length concerning the electrical problems at Shawn Rhoden's home in northeast El Paso. The old two-ply cable originally buried 25+ years ago only had a 20-year guarantee, which is why the one wire had fully corroded (likely due to tree roots) and the other one is on its way out. Sharon and Vanessa plan to take pictures at Shawn's property so that the Social Justice Committee can meet and discuss which of the two options (overhead or underground) would be best. Two quotes and materials lists are going to be provided by Coefficient Electric so that materials (which will, in part, be donated by another company) can be obtained at that point. We will definitely need to arrange a future work-party to dig so that the electric line can be put into place. There are other details that will need to be worked out as well, such as ensuring that labor and materials will be donated to complete the entire job. Keep your ears open for more updates!

Solar water distillation: Sharon has been working with a private company to build a smaller version of a community-sized test distiller, which will need to be completed sometime in March. Reverse Osmosis (R/O) brine wastewater from EP Water Utilities has been approved for pick-up so that we can use it in the still for testing purposes. It is exciting to see a project that is ultimately cheaper than R/O to be able to use R/O wastewater and purify it further using the sun! As it stands now, EPWU must inject the brine into wells to dispose of it. The potential for community water systems is high here, but we hope that final numbers from testing will be generated in the next few months so that grant proposals can be written to obtain funds for social justice community water projects for colonias later this year.

I keep you updated as things progress.



Social Justice Chair: Sharon Cornet
Sunstarangel@msn.com

Border Interfaith Volunteers Needed!

If anyone would like to get more involved with the Border Interfaith project please contact Sharon Cornet; she can put you in contact with the right people.

Annunciation House

If you would like to volunteer to help prepare a meal or donate items, please contact Ann Singer or Janet Kincaid for more info.

Casa Vidas

Please join us for the Casa Vides garden prep and lunch on Saturday, March 13! We will begin about 10 a.m. removing grass, rocks, etc., so bring shovels, pick axes, wheelbarrow, lawn bags and any other garden tools you have. Lunch will be served around noon. Janet will provide sandwiches, lemonade and dessert! If you have time and would like to bring soup and/or a side dish it would be great and much appreciated. There are more kids than adults staying there now. Casa Vides is located at 325 S. Leon Street. Coming down Kansas, take a right onto Paisano, go around the bend passing Chihuahuita; the next street is Leon; take a right and the building is on the left-hand side - right down from the fire department. Contact: Ann Singer, 755-6818 or Janet Kincaid, 539-8851.



To be an atheist requires an infinitely greater measure of faith than to simply wrestle with all the great truths which atheism would deny. --Bacon

NEED A HAND?

The *Caring Committee* at UUCEP is alive & well. If you are ill or need help of any kind or you know someone who is or does, please call Ann Singer at 915-755-6818. We will do our best to see that you are taken care of.





The Wisdom of Sages

Spring Equinox (Eostre/Ostara)

The Rites of Spring

By Dr. Leo Ruickie

The end of March is the focus for a number of religious and traditional celebrations. As the sun appears to cross the earth's equator on the 20th or 21st of March, entering the Zodiacal sign of Aries, day and night will be equal in length. This astronomical phenomenon is a day anciently revered amongst Pagan peoples. Their festivals included Alban Elfed, the Teutonic festival in honour of Eostre, Roman Hilaria Matris Deum, Welsh Gwyl Canol Gwenwynol ('Day of the Gorse'), the Wiccan Eostar (Ostara) Sabbat and the Christian Feast of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (Lady Day) as well as Easter itself.

Origins and History of Ostara

Today, Ostara is one of the eight major holidays, sabbats or festivals of Wicca. It is celebrated on the Spring Equinox, which in the northern hemisphere is around the 20th or 21st of March and in the southern hemisphere around the 23rd of September. Its modern revival is linked to some of the oldest traditions of mankind.

The Month of the Goddess

The name is thought to be derived from a goddess of German legend, according to Jakob Grimm in his *Deutsche Mythologie*. A similar goddess named Eostre was described by the Venerable Bede. Bede indicated that this name was used in English when the Paschal holiday was introduced. Since then this name (not the holiday) has been converted to Easter, or in German Ostern. Some scholars question both Bede's and Grimm's conclusions due to a lack of supporting evidence for this goddess. Others argue that a lack of further documentation is not surprising given that Bede is credited with writing the first substantial history of England (in which he described Eostre as a goddess whose worship had already passed) and Grimm was specifically attempting to capture oral traditions before they might be lost.

Despite these reservations, the idea of Eostre has become firmly established in many minds. Without any consideration of these problems, the folklorist Dr Jonathan Young categorically states:

"Easter has deep roots in the mythic past. Long before it was imported into the Christian tradition, the Spring festival honored the goddess Eostre or Eastre."

According to Bede and Einhard in his *Life of Charlemagne*, the month called Eostremonat/Ostaramanoth was equated with April. This would put the start of 'Ostara's Month' after the Equinox in March. It must be taken into account that these 'translations' of calendar months were approximate as the old forms were predominantly lunar months while the new were based on a solar year. Thus start of 'Eostremonat' would actually have fallen in late March and could thus still be associated with the Spring Equinox.

The holiday is a celebration of spring and growth, the renewal of life that appears on the earth after the winter. In mythology it is often characterized by the rejoining of the goddess and her lover-brother-son, who spent the winter months in death. This is an interesting parallel to the biblical story in which Jesus is resurrected (the reason Christians celebrate Easter), pointing to another appropriation of pre-Christian religious figures, symbols and myths by early Christianity.

*For the rest of this article, please visit: www.witchology.com/contents/march/ostara.php



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Ali Sanders 03/13
Jonny Crane 03/29

Happy Birthday to All!



PAGAN SPIRITUALITY GROUP

MARCH EVENTS:

18th Tarot Class –Crane House
20th Ostara Sabbat – Desiree
30th Drumming Circle/Esbat –
Mary Rodriguez

The Tarot study group will be meeting on Thursday, **MARCH 18, 2010**, 7pm at the Unitarian Universalist Crane House on the corner of Byron and Tyler. The group is free and open to everyone - No experience required. Study is based on Rider Waite; however, you can use any deck you like.

All events begin at 7pm and childcare is available.



From *"The Goddess Oracle"* by Marashinsky and Janto



CHILD YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CYRE March Events

Pre K-K: Teacher: Lisa McAfee and John Pearson

Differences are Important: *To be aware of the need to belong to a group or community of people. *To feel support & affirmation for their individuality. To realize that we can learn and benefit from sharing our differences with each other. *To feel a sense of belonging to this group and this religious community.

Grades 1st – 5th: Teachers: Tina Priester & Volunteers

The World Religions Class will continue studying Buddhism. We are learning about Buddha’s life as well as learning on how to meditate.

Coming of Age Group: Janet Kincaid and volunteers will discuss:

- Questions common to Unitarian Universalism.
- Reflections of their personal religious beliefs.
- Personal Respect
- Research project on famous UU’s
- Sessions with mentors

Teen Group: Teachers: Nick Emerick & Nicki Voyles

Abstract and real-life skills will be examined to find different approaches to everyday challenges and choices and how they mesh with being a Unitarian Universalist. The teens will be turning their focus on becoming more active in social justice events.

CYRE WILL BE GOING TO HORIZON HEALTH CARE FOR BUNNY BINGO ON APRIL 3,2010. ANY DONATIONS FOR THE EASTER BASKETS WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. NO RAZORS OR SHARP OBJECTS PLEASE.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CYRE ANNUAL CHOCOLATE AUCTION

On behalf of the CYRE, I would like to thank everyone who supported this important fundraiser for CYRE events. With everyone’s support, we raised **\$874!** Here are a few pictures from the auction:



Thank you!

March 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Office Closed 7 p.m. - GnUUs Choir Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall	6:30 - 8:30 p.m. - OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall 7 p.m. - A Course in Miracles, Crane House	8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Sanctuary	8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Fellowship Hall		10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall
10:30 a.m. - Service 10:30 a.m. - Children/Teen RE Classes, Crane House 11 a.m. - CYRE ARL Field Trip 2-4 p.m. - Rosicrucians, Fellowship Hall	Office Closed 7 p.m. - GnUUs Choir Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall	6:30 - 8:30 p.m. - OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall	8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Sanctuary	8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Fellowship Hall		10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall
Daylight Savings Time Begins 10:30 a.m. - Service 10:30 a.m. - Children/Teen RE Classes, Crane House 12 p.m. - Program Council, Fellowship Hall	Office Closed 7 p.m. - GnUUs Choir Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall	6:30 - 8:30 p.m. - OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall 7 p.m. - A Course in Miracles, Crane House	St. Patrick's Day 8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Sanctuary	7 p.m. - Tarot Class, Crane House 8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Fellowship Hall		10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall 7 p.m. - Ostara Celebration, Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. - Service 10:30 a.m. - Children/Teen RE Classes, Crane House 12 p.m. - Quarterly Congregational Meeting, Sanctuary 12 p.m. - Radical Knitters, Fellowship Hall 2-4 p.m. - Rosicrucians, FH	Office Closed 7 p.m. - GnUUs Choir Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall	6:30 - 8:30 p.m. - OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall	8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Sanctuary	8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Fellowship Hall		10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall
Palm Sunday 10:30 a.m. - Service 10:30 a.m. - Children/Teen RE Classes, Crane House	Office Closed 7 p.m. - GnUUs Choir Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall	Passover 7 p.m. - A Course in Miracles, Crane House 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. - OASIS Meeting, Fellowship Hall 7 p.m. - Drumming Circle/Esbat, Sanctuary	8-9:30 p.m. - NA, Sanctuary			