

Hello, friends: I mentioned last month that this IMaUU issue would be delayed, and sure enough it's more than half-way through the month now, but with luck we'll gradually get on track again. Thanks to those of you who responded speedily to my reminder about sending in contributions. Let's begin!

from a new member, **Joy Rudd** ([jrudd@laurentian.ca](mailto:jrudd@laurentian.ca))

How can I become involved since apparently there is no congregation in Sudbury, Ontario? I attend services in Manchester College, Oxford, England during my fairly frequent visits to that area.

I would definitely like to join the "IMuAA" network. I have enjoyed reading some of the past issues of the newsletter, and will no doubt read them all as time permits.

*(Welcome, Joy! We hope you'll get involved by telling us more about yourself and contributing to this newsletter in whatever way interests you.)*

from **Bunty Albert** ([bunty1948@gmail.com](mailto:bunty1948@gmail.com))

I'm happy to announce a new Unitarian, in New Maryland, NB. Callum Conrad Albert Braha was born August 4, 2010 to Danielle Albert and Adam Braha; a sister for Charlotte, 25 months. He weighed 8lb 6 oz and has fuzzy blonde hair all over his head. I'm in Fredericton helping to look after Charlotte, get meals, do laundry and whatever else to make myself useful.

I also have a second grand daughter, Annabelle Kirkwood Albert, born July 15 in Shawnee on Delaware, PA, to my son Michael Albert and his wife Amy Kirkwood, whom I'm going to visit in late August.



from **Rebecca Hogue** ([rhogue@pobox.com](mailto:rhogue@pobox.com))

*It has been a long time since I have contributed, but I do enjoy reading the updates .....  
Here is mine:*

Greetings everyone. July and early August have been a busy time for my husband and I. We took a vacation of sorts, riding our bikes across Iowa with 15,000 other cyclists (the tour is known as RAGBRAI – you can read about it on our blog at <http://goingeast.ca>). It turned out to be one of the hardest things I've done – more challenging than the most challenging on days on our 16-month bike journey. It really pointed out to me how much stress I feel when I don't have clear control over my diet or other creature comforts.

Less than a week after our return, we participated in the MS Bike ride (a fundraiser for Multiple Sclerosis society of Canada). That ride was a lot of fun, but not nearly as social as the ride across Iowa. I'm now really looking forward to a short trip (one or two days) with just the two of us and no fixed schedule – more to get that feeling back that we had when we journeyed last year.

I think the last time I provided an update, I had just started a job as a Project Manager at In-Touch Survey Systems. Unfortunately, that did not work out well for me, and in May I quit. It was quite a relief to be out of the negative office environment, but a little stressful, with neither my husband nor I working. I'm now working on a project that I hope will launch a company and hoping to find some contract work in the fall (I have a couple hot-leads, so I'm optimistic). My adventures over the last few year have taught me to have faith that opportunities will present themselves, and to take advantage of them when they do.

Cheers,  
Becky



And here's a photo of Scott and I dipping our tires in the Mississippi River in Dubuque Iowa after the last day's RAGBRAI ride (I was pretty tired at that point).

from **Suzanne Hansen** ([suzanneamyhansen@shaw.ca](mailto:suzanneamyhansen@shaw.ca))

I find it difficult to get my act together regularly to check in and offer submissions but I read the newsletter everymonth as soon as it arrives! I've attached a piece that I wrote at the request of Mary Bennett a couple years ago. It appeared in a slightly modified version in Can U. I also have a bit that was prepared for CUUL School about my experience at the General Assembly in June. I'll refine it and submit it . . . soon(ish)! It was brilliant! The warm weather came early to Northern Ontario so we're having a lovely, long summer, full adventures with family and friends.

We're all well, sailing, playing and learning.

Suzanne

### Homeschooling – Guided by Our Unitarian Universalist Principles

When one reveals an intention to homeschool one's children, the responses are wide ranging. I've learned that if you're going to homeschool your kids, it's wise to be really clear, confident and articulate about your motivations. We've been planning to homeschool our daughters from early on and while I might easily generate a list of negative reasons to opt out of the school system for now, I don't find it a particularly illuminating or fair approach. It's much more empowering to consider the positive reasons for choosing to educate our daughters at home.

I like short mission statements. When well written, they have the ability to immediately clarify a decision. Now, I will admit, that though we have done the 'visioning' part of the work, we haven't yet got the mission statement pulled together. We know what our goals are for educating at home – to raise competent and confident daughters, who believe that they and their individual passions are worthwhile. We would encourage our daughters to pursue their own paths to insight and to gather wisdom and experience in ways and time that respect their particular needs, skills and interests. We will model learning as a lifelong pleasure. We can evaluate ourselves as successful if we have created opportunities for them to explore the rich diversity of our world, helped them to understand that they are part of an incredible universe and that they have both the power and responsibility to act in a way that honours it. To have as much fun as possible while accomplishing all this is also part of the vision!

There's a good chance that we'll never actually get around to refining our homeschool mission statement to a few illuminating words, but we'll be just fine. Hanging on our kitchen wall, easily available for reference, is a poster of the children's version of the UU Principles. Linnea and Mila both figured out early that the ability to read can open up whole worlds to them and both spend a considerable amount of time reading. One afternoon, Linnea asked me to help her read the Principles poster and as we worked our way through the words, it dawned on me that our reasons for homeschooling are perfectly reflected there. We home educate for religious reasons.

Even more than mission statements, I like living what I call a 'coherent life', by which I mean that my values are revealed through my actions as consistent across the spectrum of work or roles I undertake. I look to our Principles often for guidance because of their straightforward and clear articulation of my own values. Although I understand that it should be obvious that the best decisions I make in my life are those based solidly in those values, I acknowledge I did experience one of my 'Oh, Duh!' moments as I read through that poster with my daughter. There are many ways to homeschool. Approaches run the gamut from very structured models to the very unstructured and there are many philosophies of learning. No matter *how* we decide to homeschool, our Unitarian Universalist Principles can serve as a reminder to *why* we choose to do so.



Karl and Suzanne enjoying a "Mom and Dad only" break in the San Jacinto mountains

from **Janet Vickers** ([janetvickers@shaw.ca](mailto:janetvickers@shaw.ca))

Here on Gabriola we have enjoyed local entertainments. First it was "Tuesdays with Morrie" with Antony Holland playing the title role. Then we went to the Lions Concert on the Green and listened to two groups - *Twisted Solicitors* and *The Timebenders* as we enjoyed our own picnic. Last Saturday was the The Community Hall Salmon BBQ which I volunteered for and enjoyed. There are many things happening here during the Summer and we are finding that the community really does invest in this Island. We had rain Saturday, Sunday and Monday, finally after two months of dry sunshine which has replenished our gardens nicely.

Lipstick Press is about to launch a new chapbook of poetry by Al Remple titled *The Picket Fence diaries*, printed on TreeFree paper.

Our eldest daughter, Elaine, returned from Australia after completing her Oenology Diploma and it has been lovely to have her back home.

I attach a photo of a frog that rested on our sliding doors for a day.

regards  
Janet



from **Maureen Killoran** ([mmk@spiritquest.ws](mailto:mmk@spiritquest.ws))

I recently received the designation "Professional Transition Specialist" through the interfaith Interim Ministry Network (IMN) -- the first UU minister to receive this level of certification, which is the highest available through the IMN. I'll begin work as Interim Senior Minister with the 700-member River Road UU Congregation in Bethesda, MD, in mid-August. Wish me luck!

*Rev. Dr. Maureen Killoran*  
*Professional Transition Specialist*

from **Noreen Smith** ([smithfsj@gmail.com](mailto:smithfsj@gmail.com)):

Hi to all

I have had a very busy summer as I have been doing my College courses all summer and they are quite condensed (16 week course fit into 8) and highly demanding. I am enjoying the learning, but am feeling a bit overwhelmed and doubting I can go the mile. I have taken 4 courses out of 24, so I won't be complete my Early childhood diploma for close to four years. I'll be almost 50 at that point and it seems like to much to take on...costly for time but also for money. My son will be attending College in two years and we have next to nothing saved for him. It makes me wonder if I am being selfish using the extra money for my schooling when I should be winding down in life rather than saving it for him when he is just starting out!

I did manage to fit in some vacation. I toured southern Alberta and took in the cypress hill interprovincial park area. Loved it! Incredible drive and views. Toured on to Writing on Stone and Head Smashed in Buffalo jump parks. Had excellent weather, though some days were too hot (40 celsius or more!). Just me and my 10 year old daughter, a two man tent, and the minivan. Nice mom and daughter adventure.

We have had terrific weather all summer in FSJ. My flower beds are looking fantastic and everything is wonderfully green and growing like crazy. I know the areas around us are suffering from serious drought, but we seem to be unaffected. In fact its the first year I can remember where we haven't had watering restrictions imposed.



raspberries in front of new gazebo



pond my son built using local sandstone

from **Lloyd Ryan** ([execontrol@yahoo.ca](mailto:execontrol@yahoo.ca))

Hi, Anne!

I am attaching an article, **The Therapeutic Relationship**, that I wrote several years ago. I have just read it through and made some clarifications. I have written it from the perspective of Unitarian Christianity, although I no longer identify myself as being precisely that. My theology keeps changing as I keep aging. Quite frankly, I am not at all sure what it is today - and I suspect that that is not all that important. It is the search, the continuing evolution of the self that is of value. In any case, it is still interesting to be able to write while utilizing Biblical references without having to be dogmatic or doctrinaire; to find meaning in a context where one has to dig out the bits of possible wisdom and try not to be arrogant - nor overly humble!  
Lloyd

*(editor's note: I've extracted the gist of the article in a few paragraphs which I think might provoke some discussion – I do hope you'll send me (and/ or Lloyd) your responses, whatever they may be. I'm aware that the excerpts I've chosen reflect my own sense of what's most interesting, so feel free to ask Lloyd how I've kept or distorted the thrust of his writing – and he'll be glad to send you the whole article on request.)*

*excerpts:*

It is, now, seemingly well established that most, if not all, emotional problems are the result of dysfunctional or traumatic interpersonal relationships. The root of the problem is that people are social creatures and, thus, creatures of relationship. This characteristic of people is so strong that [famed psychiatrist R.D.] Laing says that people are “... *addicted to other persons, and the more addicted, the less satisfied, the more lonely*”. .....

Regardless of whether one takes a strictly religious perspective or a more relaxed human-evolution one, the conclusion is virtually the same. It is interesting that evolutionary biologists, psychologists, and theologians see eye to eye on the essence of what it means to be human. .... [In the Bible,] Because positive and supportive interpersonal relationships are so vital to our everyday physical and mental health, no wonder we are exhorted to do unto others as we would have them do unto us (*Luke 6*), and no wonder we are told to forgive each other without counting the number of times (*Matt. 18*) and no wonder we are charged with the responsibility to treat each other as if we were serving Jesus himself (*Matt. 25*).

In general, the thesis is that humanity had to develop close social relationships very early in their evolutionary development in order to survive as a species. Not only was this necessary for immediate survival but was imperative for the process of growth to physical maturity from infancy to independence. It continues to amaze us, even today, that a human child comes from the womb barely ready for life, completely dependent for every need, completely helpless, grossly underdeveloped, with so little brain development that the child is little more than a *potential* person. Thus, harmonious social living [is] one of the major prerequisite building blocks of humanity's development.

..... right from the cradle, the child seeks its affirmation of trust and wholeness and value, first in its mother's eyes and then, successively, in the response of other care givers, such as teachers. Freud and later psychotherapists have all articulated how important relationships are and how negatively affected people are when they are not able to find positive reflection of themselves in others' eyes. This is so important that, according to Laing, even the most severe mental and emotional disorders (e.g., schizophrenia) frequently have their origins within the relationship with those with whom we have the closest interpersonal relationships (e.g., the family).

In a somewhat similar (existential-humanist) vein [psychologist] Abraham Maslow, in discussing his theories of human development to maturity, emphasized the needs that people have for interpersonal relations, and also emphasized the products of these relationships. Maybe, the most important of these by-products is love. Maslow says that the “...*love need ... is a deficit need. It is a hole which has to be filled, an emptiness into which love is poured. If this healing necessity is not available, severe pathology results.*”

Maslow ..... says that interpersonal relationships are so very important to people [that] they will *give up the self and give up growth rather than lose their relationships with the people who are important to them*. In the absence of fulfilling the normal potential for creative growth, neurosis results and people fail to achieve their rightful status of becoming fully human.

Because *relationships are the vehicle through which we love and are loved and also provide us with feelings of personal worth, value and affirmation*, we are particularly vulnerable to becoming too dependent or too possessive, [addictive] processes which cause us to obtain the gratification of our needs from others. Thus, we are vulnerable to personal psychological injury.

Because we develop these addictions we become inward looking and preoccupied, maybe obsessed, with ourselves. .... once we become preoccupied by our own problems, we become bound by them, and if we do not succeed in developing healthy relationships with others we become self-centered, which leads to inner conflict and breakdown.

.... [A]ppropriate relationships [provide] the way out of the emotional morass in which people find themselves. In the first instance, that relationship is with people, but ultimately the relationship has to be with the ultimate, with the God of their understanding, with the realization of Grace as individuals perceive that spiritual phenomenon. One possible way of looking at that concept of Grace is implicit in the notion of forgiving ourselves, picking ourselves up, and continuing on our way, or in the acceptance of absolution .....

Both humanistic and pastoral therapists have realized the fractured relationship source of many, if not most, personal problems that people present when seeking therapy, and they also recognize that relationship-based counselling is likely to be the most effective, helpful caring that they are able to provide. .... [R]esearch indicates that if a person with problems can develop a good relationship with someone, even a good friend, that in [a vast majority] of the cases there will be some improvement. .... [But] it is not sufficient that therapists merely attempt to develop a good relationship with the client .... the relationship is a necessary but not sufficient condition for effective therapeutic caring.

[In summary] we now have substantiated that many, if not most, personal problems that people present when seeking counselling have their roots in personal interrelationships. We have also established that healing is most likely to occur in the context of genuine caring that is integral to a therapeutic relationship. For Christians, they have the assurance of divine grace as a most powerful force for healing that is available for those who seek, a promise that is contained within a call to personal growth, to discipleship. Furthermore, highly skilled and thoughtful people have provided guidance and direction regarding appropriate attitudes, techniques, and structure in which relationship can work its magic.

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*Again, I hope that you will respond to these excerpts with your own thoughts – and this is perhaps a good time to remind you that you’re encouraged to write directly to anyone in this network, as well as carrying on “conversations” within the newsletter. The more we do this, the more our small IMAUU community will be able to develop and become multi-dimensional.*

from **StaceyAnne Vickery** ([greenwylowwytch@yahoo.com](mailto:greenwylowwytch@yahoo.com))

Hello All,

It has been an amazing, busy summer. Just a note - I identify as Pagan first and then as Unitarian - I have followed a Pagan path for fifteen years and been part of the Unitarian movement for the last six.

One weekend in August we went to a Pagan Festival near our home. The children had many opportunities to meet new people, play with new friends and try new things. I had the opportunity to lead two workshops, one on making a wand for children and the second in teaching songs and chants. We participated in four Rituals and learned so much about following the seasons and nature in our daily rhythms.

Cara, my eldest, participated in 4H this past year and soon will be involved in having her projects judged at the Exhibition. I am so excited for her. She has worked hard and learned so much (not just how to make crafts).

We are getting ready to start the school year again - I have lots of planning to do. We will be learning very different things this year, wish us well.

All is going well here - I look forward to hearing from all of you

StaceyAnne

And finally, from me, Anne Treadwell ([treadwell@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:treadwell@ns.sympatico.ca))

It's been a wonderful summer in Nova Scotia, but for the first half of August I've been in Hamilton, Ontario, for a wedding and a visit with old friends and three sets of family here. This, too, has been a great time (and the worst of the sticky heat had dissipated by the time we arrived), but as usual I'm now looking forward to being back home. It will be specially good because the 5-weeks-long chaos of kitchen renovation is finally over, with the finishing touches being added just as we left for our trip.

The anticipation is a bit tempered by the fact that on September 1<sup>st</sup> John's leaving for his annual 3 months of volunteer work in Guyana, South America. I'll miss him a lot, though I certainly think he's doing a good thing there – mainly, he teaches student nurses about psychology, sociology and medical ethics (he and a colleague are introducing problem-based learning this year), along with interaction in local (Georgetown) orphanages and some pastoral work in the church where he'll be living this time. John's a Lutheran pastor, who'll be working in a Catholic hospital – and he has a Unitarian wife, so our life is theologically diverse!

On the next page are some July photos of our Nova Scotia garden, which will be a jungle when we get back, I know, followed by some of our August family gatherings.



July 25: first cup plant blooms



July 23: butterfly & bush



July 25: pond-side



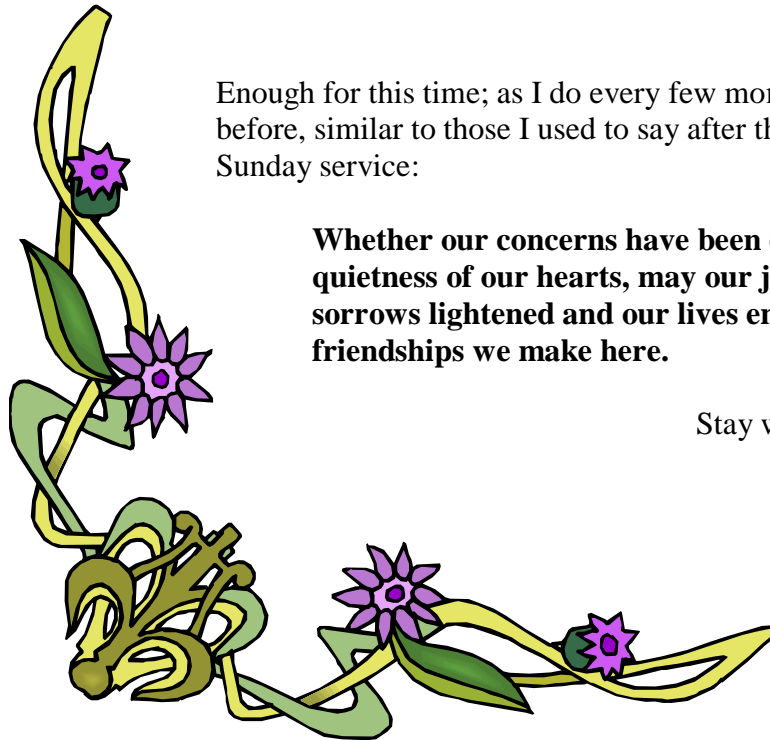
friends for 40 years



youngest grandchild's first "swim"



four of our seven



Enough for this time; as I do every few months, I'll end with words I've quoted before, similar to those I used to say after the sharing of Joys and Sorrows in a Sunday service:

**Whether our concerns have been expressed in words or remain in the quietness of our hearts, may our joys always be heightened, our sorrows lightened and our lives enriched by the connections and friendships we make here.**

Stay well, and stay in touch!

*Anne*