

Greetings, and welcome again to this informal network of Individual Members. Several of you have connected with us through the help of Rev. Maureen Killoran, who at one time was responsible for the Individual Members Programme – in its heyday it had about 90 members! Maureen echoed my thought that some Canadians who belong to CLF might like to be connected with this group too – and she was right! (Thanks, Maureen.)

I'm delighted to introduce the latest members of our network:

Lindsey Webster wbstar@gmail.com

"I am a psychiatric nurse in British Columbia, finishing up my last year of nursing education. I'm also a writer -- mostly fiction and poetry. I have just finished writing my first novel and need to finish editing before publishing it. Also, I am editor of an online literary magazine, Cerulean Rain. I love animals and have a dog, cat and degu. I'm currently not involved in any congregations simply because, schedule-wise, I am just not able to get to church these days, especially not for Sunday morning, though I would like to. Thus, I am a member of CLF for that reason. I live close to Beacon Unitarian Church and have been trying to get there for Sunday morning worship since the beginning of January, but it just never works out because of my schedule."

Suzanne Hansen suzanneamyhansen@shaw.ca

"Do add me/us to the list. I am one of those Canadian UU's who is a member of our local congregation (Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship) and also a member of the CLF because they offer great services and another opportunity for me to keep linked in to the larger UU community and perspective. We are also homeschoolers of our girls, Linnea and Mila and members of the UU Homeschoolers (yahoo group) though that group is heavily US focused. I would be very interested in connecting Canadian UU Homeschoolers so if any of you are in this group - wave your flags!!"

And don't forget - the CUC Annual Conference and Meeting will be here in Thunder Bay over the May Long Weekend. It would be wonderful to arrange an opportunity to meet face to face!"

Janet Kusler

"I am happy to be on an email list, but not interested in a Facebook group. I'm both a member of CLF and of UU Fellowship of Kamloops. For the next issue, I can give you a summary of my sabbatical in New Zealand over the last 6 months. We are just wrapping up here and will go to Australia for 3 months on April 1."

Kim Stark starttle@gmail.com

"I grew up in Sackville, NB and did both my undergrads at Acadia in Wolfville NS. The Maritimes are my favorite place on earth. (I told Kim that I'm still adjusting to stormy Atlantic weather, and she responded:) Yes, the storms, you'll get used to them. We used to have to fill our

bath tub with water to make sure we had enough to last out because we were on a well with an electric pump and we kept a whole drawer full of emergency candles! And once, when I was 12, a friend and I got blown out to sea in that big wind that comes just before the storm really hits (we were in a rubber raft and weren't strong enough to paddle against the tide and the wind. We eventually got air lifted out by air/sea rescue).

I am happy to tell y'all a bit about myself. I grew on a "farm"/wildlife preserve. Both my parents taught at Mount Allison University (my father is a musicologist and my mother specializes in Eastern religions) but we raised pigs and chickens and apples and raspberries because of a ghost problem that could only be appeased by these activities (and I do not usually believe in such things! ;). When I got older I started rescuing injured and orphaned wild animals and we became a wildlife preserve. So one thing I am keenly interested in and motivated and sustained by is nature and animals and our connection and responsibility to them.

I crazily have two undergraduate degrees from Acadia University. They are actually both in English Literature. One is a traditional undergrad degree and the other has creative writing and elementary education attached to it (and is a longer story than I have time to tell right now). I also have a number of half-masters degrees (I know, another long story). They are in: restoration of natural resources, Anthropology, Creative Writing, and Theology. Also, I have dabbled in Gallery and Museum studies, Montessori education and puppetry.

I have worked as a teacher, writer and in children's theatre. I have two really fabulous kids (not even exaggerating here). They are 6 and about to be 9-egads!. I am an artist (mostly recycled junk, found objects, puppets and needle sculpture/softie), writer and storyteller. Mostly my work is whimsical and a little bit darkish and comments on various things I find funny or ironic about people and situations (I can send a cool picture if you want). I am also in the process of co-founding a nature education based school using an expanded version of a curriculum I originally wrote for UU RE. I also run puppetry and craft workshops and facilitate various children's theatre experiences.

*My favorite food is Mike and Ike jelly beans (the citrus ones); my favorite movies are *The Flight of the Red Balloon* and *Man on Wire*, my favorite music is Broadway showtunes, and my favorite books (fiction) are the *Swallows and Amazons* books by Arthur Ransome and everything by Noel Streatfield (I can't choose a non-fiction favorite-there are too many). My favorite thing to do (besides all of the above) is to play. I play in my teaching, I play with my art, I play with my kids, I play with puppets, I play with theatre, I play with writing, and I play with my dog. I believe in play as a state of being (and you don't even have to take my word for it, as, in my effort to justify all this playing, I found all kinds of studies about play as a state of being-who knew?). Also, it's just too darn fun not to. I hope that gives you a clearer picture of at least some parts of me. Thanks again for inviting me. It is nice to feel a bit more connected."*

Maggie Robertson maggier@295.ca

"Thanks for writing. I do try to attend evening services at First Congregation in Toronto but I haven't joined yet. It would be fun to have a CUC newsletter for a while to try it out although I don't tend to read a lot on line. Thanks!"

Rebecca Hogue

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blog link: <http://goingeast.ca/blog>

“I’d be happy to be on the list. I joined the CLF because I’m travelling for a year and a half – until September 2009. Because we are constantly on the move, the only practical way for me to access CLF and any CUC initiate is via email. So although I think Facebook would be neat, it doesn’t work for me at the moment because I’m not connected often enough.

I would love to see a discussion group similar to the CLF main list, where we do a weekly joys and concerns / checkin. I think check-in would be a better term – a way for everyone to just send a short note out once a week about what is happening in their lives. This would allow people to get to know each other better and provide a sense of connectedness to something.

Cheers,

Becky (in Chukai, Malaysia)”

And here’s a couple of recent pictures from Becky and Scott’s blog – Becky enjoying Songkram celebrations in Thailand, Scott trying to shelter from the rain.



Do check out the blog for more of their excellent adventures

Well!! Isn’t that a wonderful array of interesting people? I encourage you to contact any of them individually and/ or to send comments and further information for inclusion in future newsletters. The connections have certainly started, and I’m hopeful that they will spread. If you, too, have a blog or web page, please send us the link(s).

Because I’m particularly grateful for the past CUC work which led to finding these six new network members, I’ll include this reminder: there’s no cost for this newsletter or these

connections, but being registered with the CUC as an “official” Individual Member does require a donation: please consider contacting the CUC to arrange this.

I’m writing this on a lovely April day, after a particularly harsh winter, and it seems appropriate to end with words from Rev. Dianne Arakawa – I’ve used these every Springtime since I found them, as opening words in a service, or for a grace at mealtime or just as a reading to remind myself of the many causes I have to be grateful.

*Today we give thanks for having made safe journey
through the cold and long winter months
when silence engulfed us and stillness encased us
and barrenness left its mark.*

*We remember those who have helped us make passage,
who have held us, fed us,
nurtured us, healed us,
and offered us enduring encouragement.*

*Let us enter this season
with appreciation for the past,
with patience for things that require time to change,
and with hope for renewal of the Spirit of Life.*

Happy Springtime, and warm good wishes from the Editor, who is looking forward to hearing from as many of you as possible – with photos, ideas, thoughts to share, questions, suggestions “only connect”!

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