



# JPD Newsletter

Connecting all Unitarian Universalists in the Joseph Priestley District:

Southern New Jersey, Delaware, Eastern and Central Pennsylvania, Maryland,

November-December, 2004

District of Columbia, Northern Virginia

Vol. 10 No. 2

## **UU On-going Transylvania Connection Yields Trips, Fundraisers, Warm Ties**

The Transylvania connection between JPD's UU churches is alive and well. Throughout the summer, there were trips to Transylvania, a flow of aid, and exchanges of warm regard.

On an Eastern European concert tour, the choir and others from UU Church of Annapolis, MD visited its Partner Church in Rava.

Thirty-two members of Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church, Alexandria, VA also visited its Partner Church. They took with them a variety of school supplies for K-8th grades. Previous sales of holiday cards and summer brunches helped pay for supplies.

Two members of River Road Unitarian Church, Bethesda, MD, also visitors to its Partner Church, report that the tractor which River Road purchased in 1996 has benefited the entire village, providing low-priced services to local farmers and generating more than \$1,000 for the Fiatfalva church.

Main Line Unitarian Church raised \$2,900 for its Partner Church's high school scholarship program in Koloszar. Four hundred dollars of the total will help a student study to become a Unitarian minister.

Fundraising efforts by UU Church of Rockville, MD provided room and board for three high school students, supplies for the village school and a ministerial stipend.

Looking back over 14 years of aid to its Partner Church, UU Congregation of Fairfax, Oakton, VA has installed a school playground, provided Christmas gifts to seniors and children, scholarships to 25 students for high school and college and exchanged visits between Fairfax members and Partner Church ministers. More ambitious plans are in the pipe-line: perhaps the addition of a second Partner Church.

UUs of Sterling, VA welcomed Rev. Zsolt Solymosi, the assistant minister at the First

Unitarian Church in Kolozsvár, who delivered a summer sermon.

And, as the new church year swings into high gear, plans are already underway for fall and spring annual Hungarian festivals to raise funds anew for Partner Churches.

## **Cedar Lane Rocks -- Hungarian Style**

Hungary's famous rock opera, *Stan a Kiraly* ("Stephen the King") was presented at a premiere performance in the DC area at Cedar Lane UU Church, Bethesda, MD in early fall.

Sung by Budapest music students, the opera tells the story of Hungary's first Christian king who was crowned on Christmas Day, 1,000 A.D.

The performance raised funds for Cedar Lane's Partner Church in Transylvania.

## **Sugarloaf UUs Focus on Soul AND Body Through New Wellness Project**

The Germantown, MD Sugarloaf Congregation of UUs, a relative newcomer among UU churches, has launched a Health and Wellness project for its more than 100-member congregation.

The project grew out of the needs of the congregation and the goals of the "Healthy People 2010" of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Jump-started by Gwen Stamper, church member and physical therapist, and with help from the Caring and Membership Committees, the project includes blood pressure and hearing screening clinics, discussion groups on weight control and stress management; lectures; and weekly fitness group and healthy activities, such as walking, hiking, Tai Chi exercises. Future events include a children's health and wellness fair, a health library and community outreach.

The project is also developing a resource group of medical professionals in the congregation.

## Two Churches Mark 50th Anniversaries

UU Congregation of York, PA and Davies Memorial UU Church, Camp Springs, MD are celebrating 50th anniversaries this fall.

Rev. William G. Sinkford, UUA president, spoke at October services marking York's celebration. Davis Memorial plans several events in November.

## More UUs Joined Ranks of Voter Registrars

Since the *Newsletter's* last issue, more UU churches and fellowships reported joining voter registration and mobilization efforts throughout the summer and fall.

They were: UU Church of Annapolis, MD; First Churches of Baltimore, MD, and Wilmington, DE; Cedar Lane UU, Bethesda, MD; UUs of Cumberland Valley, Boiling Springs, PA; and UU Fellowships of Centre County, State College, PA, Pottstown, PA, and Southern Maryland, Leonardtown, MD; also the Congregations of Sugarloaf, Germantown, MD and Wyoming Valley, Wilkes Barre, PA.

## What's Happening....

UU Fellowship of Pottstown, PA voted (more than 80 per cent) to become a Welcoming Congregation...UU Congregation of Wyoming Valley has a new office: 202 S. Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701, as does UU Fellowship of Southern Maryland: Manor House of Summerseat Sanctuary, P.O. Box 1703, Leonardtown, MD 20650, tel: 301-373-9293....The Chalice Grant application of UU Congregation of the South Jersey Shore, Oceanville, NJ was approved by the Growth and Extension Committee of the Joseph Priestley District. The congregation will receive approximately \$20,000 toward its building fund and the purchase of land...UU Fellowship of Centre County, State College, PA dedicated a new state-of-the-art playground, for members and the community.... Launching a new program, UU Church of Silver Spring, MD confirmed its first team of six lay ministers who will assist Rev. Liz Lerner with pastoral ministry....Bull Run UUs, Manassas, VA will receive its Green Sanctuary Certificate before the end of the year...UU of the Cumberland Valley, Boiling Springs, PA is selling used books donated by the congregation on the Internet at Half.com. The sales raised \$800 last year.

*What We Care About....Members of UU Congregation of York, PA sewed a Gay Pride Quilt, named "Unity," to be hung in the church lobby. T-shirts, some worn on Gay Pride marches, bandanas, placemats, a neck tie, were used. Leader of the project stitched on graffiti words, such as, "pride, acceptance, dignity." The Congregation also held a special service and celebration for National Coming Out Day (October 11). This is for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons who come out for the first time to their family and friends and celebrate their strength and pride in themselves....Buxmont UU Fellowship, Warrington, PA joined other JPD UUs by agreeing each month to share a part of its collection plate with a local cause....UUs of Sterling, VA adopted a family at an abused women's center and gave an October collection toward this project...UU Congregation of Wyoming Valley, Wilkes Barre, PA launched a meals-on-wheels program to feed its community's homebound residents....Books for prisoners were provided by Accotink UU Church, Burke, VA and UU Church of Hagerstown, MD. Accotink collected 375 books and received a \$343 donation for shipping books to a chaplain of a 1,000-man prison in Virginia....Hagerstown UUs collected books and magazines for a prison's basic reading program. These are then passed on to men in isolation units...UU Fellowship of Pottstown, PA joined an area Volunteer Home Care Project, providing transportation, snow shoveling, shopping, lawn-mowing, and other services for the elderly.*

"When a whole nation is roaring patriotism at the top of its voice, I am fain to explore the cleanness of its hands and purity of its heart." -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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