



WINTER ISSUE
DECEMBER 2023

Fellowship News

Infolettre UUFO



Climate Action On Display

By Pat Lucey

Over the past few months, while planning the November 5th Climate Action Group potluck, the members of this group did their research about the effect of food production on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and they made some interesting discoveries, which they have shared with us through informational handouts and a display of wall posters in the Sanctuary. And many thanks to Elinor and Gary, who contributed the following information for this article:



While many of us have been concerned about carbon emissions from air travel, and made the natural assumption that importing fruit and vegetables by air from afar would be a significant concern, we learned that this is not such an important issue. Instead, we should be focused on the production of GHG emissions (methane especially) from what we eat, particularly dairy and beef. Choosing a more plant-based diet is one way we can contribute to climate action, but other types of meat, including pork and chicken, have far less of an impact than does the beef industry.

Gary researched the global warming effects of methane (CH4), and he found that when GHG emissions are measured over a 20-year period, methane is 80 times worse than CO2 because it settles out of the atmosphere quite quickly over decades rather than over centuries, which is the case with CO2. So over a 20-year period, reducing methane emissions is more effective than reducing CO2, and the effects will be more noticeable more quickly because CO2 is slow to decrease, and is commonly estimated over a 100-year period.

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See the posters in the Sanctuary!

Caring and Sharing Family News



We love to hear travel stories! Here are some lovely family connection stories!

from Marina: "I enjoyed a week in Bend, Oregon -recently - home of my nephew Robert Pfeffer (son of Gladys & Bill Pfeffer). I travelled with my daughter, Elizabeth, and her husband Barry. The weather was unseasonably pleasant which made hiking a lot of fun for Elizabeth and Barry. I loved the landscape of Oregon just East of the snow-capped Cascade mountains which we saw in the distance. West of the mountains on the coast the weather would be much rainier. So the geography of Bend was mostly high desert with lots of huge juniper trees and lava fields - a great place to visit!"



from Chris: "My daughter Sara, and I visited my mother and sister in Victoria this past April. As Sara had not seen her grandmother in 7 years it was a lovely reunion with much celebration of Sara's thirtieth birthday and early Mother's Day. It was truly delightful to have three generations together sharing memories of times past."



from Nanci: "Just met my newest family member on a trip to Ann Arbor. She's obviously off to a great start!"



What's Brewing?



Have you wondered about the delicious coffee that we serve at UUFO?

It is Cafe Justicia distributed by **Education in Action** here in Ottawa. Cafe Justicia is a **delicious organic "fair trade plus" coffee** grown by **Mayan communities** on the volcanic slopes above Lake Atitlan in Guatemala.

Cafe Justicia is also a **philosophy and practice of solidarity trade** that builds cooperation between consumers and producers while ensuring that the producers are firmly in the driver's seat, making the final decisions regarding pricing, distribution and marketing. Cafe Justicia is **produced by cooperatives** organized by the Campesino Committee of the Highlands (CCDA)

You can visit education-in-action.squarespace.com for more information and to order Café Justicia

Pubs tend to attract Unitarians and Cape Breton this fall was no exception. During the Fall Colours Music Festival, Fran, Nick, Tom and Nanci ran into each other at the Rankin's Red Shoe Pub and at several of the evening concerts.



Food and Climate Action

(Continued from page 1)

Gary was curious about the big difference he discovered between the Canadian beef and dairy industries' methane production: when measured in kg of food produced vs. kg of methane emissions per year, beef is much worse than dairy – milk is over 30 times better than beef. Methane reduction strategies exist (changes to bovine diet, biogas capture as fuel, etc.), but none are currently being practiced on a large scale.

Another significant environmental problem associated with food production is the use of synthetic pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers, which cause significant detrimental changes to the soil, air and water, with resultant levels of toxicity in what we eat. There are many local farmers who do not use chemicals; instead, they regenerate their soil naturally, using methods which promote carbon capture. They may or may not be certified organic, but they are usually quite willing to discuss their farming practices with their customers. Buying from them helps support these local farms as well as assuring us of nutritious food. We learned of many outlets for local farm produce in farmers' markets which continue all year, in local stores, and in Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) programs in the spring/summer/fall.

There is a list of some of these on a poster in the Sanctuary. For a complete list of local farms check the website of Savour Ottawa: savourottawa.ca ■



Affordable Housing Update

Contact: Chris Baddeley Girard

Our group is gratified to see that the issue of affordable housing is now making headlines consistently in various types of media. All levels of governments (federal, provincial, municipal) have declared their support for creating affordable housing for low and mid-income families through a variety of initiatives.

The federal government has announced the development of the Housing Accelerator Fund managed by CMHC which promises to use surplus government lands for 26,000 new builds over the next five years, 20 percent of these new builds are to be designated as 'affordable housing', with 2800 units to be built by 2024. Funding for projects will be based on cities changing bylaws to increase density capacity within city limits.

NDP Ontario has unveiled Homes Ontario, a strategy that aims to establish a \$15 billion revolving fund in collaboration with CMHC to finance new non-market homes.

This plan advocates the funding of rehabilitation of aging affordable housing, partnering with federal and municipal governments.

According to their website, the City Of Ottawa works with private and not-for-profit sectors to develop affordable housing as part of the 10 year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The goal is to find ways to improve housing affordability for low-income households by negotiating, and advocating with other levels of government, community agencies, developers and other City departments.

Members of Affordable Housing Group have attended a range of webinars, workshops and meetings including: The Council on Aging, Age Friendly Housing Community Conversations; the Migrant Rights Network: fixing the housing crisis; Off the Hill (rabble.ca), Why we're in an affordable housing crises and how to fix it; and a Walrus Talk, discussing the need for affordable housing. All were informative to varying degrees, offering solutions to the problem.

Within our own Heartwood House community, two groups are working very hard to develop viable solutions. Acorn Ottawa is advocating the case for a Renoviction Bylaw similar to the one currently being used in Westminster, BC. Multifaith Housing Initiative celebrated National Housing Day on Nov. 19. It is a day of affordable housing advocacy to raise awareness about housing and homelessness.

We are looking forward to having Shada Alolo, Manager, Community Engagement at Multifaith Housing Initiative, as our guest speaker on Sunday, Feb. 18, 2024. ■

Board Walk: What's This Pledging Thing Anyway?

By Nick LePan, Board President

A budget? Finances? That's boring. That's complicated. Leave that to the Board!

We are in the middle of our pledge campaign. Why does that matter? The board is spending considerable time on finances. I want Fellowship members and friends to have a snapshot of our situation. It matters to what we can do next year.

Here's our finances One liner: Our operating revenue is about \$82,000 a year and our expenses are pretty close to our revenue each year. **And we depend on you to finance the Fellowship.** Some years revenue is one or two thousand dollars more than expenses, some years one or two thousand dollars less.

That seems like a lot.

Where does our revenue come from?

Overwhelmingly its from you! A big thank you!!!

About \$77,000 of the \$82,000 is donations from you. We make about \$5,000 in rental revenue a year—from 'our' space. That's important and growing. But it can't offset any big drop in financial contributions from you.

What are the major items we spend on? The biggest is our share of the costs of operating the building with Heartwood House—heating, light, water and so on. That's about \$23,000. To that add the \$6,000 a year we put aside in a fund to pay our share of major repairs like the roof. The building is a big deal. It was good that when the roof needed replacing we were able to step up with our share of the costs. Thanks to previous Boards that put money aside!

The second biggest expenditure is support staff. That's all the help Sarah gives us. If anything, we have found more need for this and the Board has been allocating more money for this support. It really eases the day-to-day work for everyone and greatly enhances our experience.

We have several other unavoidable expenses—insurance, fees for our bookkeeping and audit, membership in the CUC—those total about \$18,000.

The rest is everything else—refugee support, amounts spent by groups, costs for speakers and music, costs for outreach.....The 'fun' stuff.

So what about pledging?

Last year \$75,000 of our total donations were pledged at the beginning of the year. In December the Board does a plan of finances for the coming year—it's approximate because things can change. We present that plan in a meeting with members and friends in January. I encourage you to attend. That plan helps many of the groups in the fellowship know what funds they have. And it helps determine whether we can take on any new initiatives, or if we have to cut back.



To prepare that plan we ask you to tell us what contribution you intend to make—that's your pledge. And we ask how you intend to contribute—up front, monthly, some other cadence, through etransfer, cheque, the offering baskets. Any way works!

We count on that pledge and pledges are honoured. Last year a high percentage of our revenue was pledged before the year started.

All that avoids us making a budget on things that don't come true. It avoids a disruptive adjustment part way through the year.

As of writing we had received \$65,260 in pledges. We hope this can get to \$70,000-\$75,000.

So please make a pledge if you can, of whatever amount you can. A big, big thank you. From the board and from your fellow Members and Friends.

FUN WITH FINANCE!

Do you know... What is the most unpredictable annual expense related to our building?

(Find the answer later in this newsletter!)

Remembering Carolyn Creery

Pat Lucey

Carolyn Creery, Janet's mother, passed away in Ottawa on Wednesday, September 6, 2023, just shy of her 92nd birthday, with her family at her side.

She was an enthusiastic participant in the Fellowship from 2017 until 2020. When COVID-19 quarantining began in March 2020, she remained at home with Janet for a while, and following that, she moved into the Garry Armstrong residence, where she was cherished by the many friends she made there.

At the Nov. 4th memorial service, Claire recalled hearing Carolyn's lovely singing voice for the first time. Claire quickly recruited her for the New Edinburgh choir, and at the memorial service, friends from her choir days honoured Carolyn with their singing, and Claire shared some memories from their choir days together.

From Marlene: "I frequently took Indigo to the UUFO services, and sometimes also picked up Janet and Carolyn en route. It was always a pleasure to have them join us, and Janet and Indigo would sometimes get the giggles in the back seat. Then I vividly remember Carolyn giving me a sly look and saying quietly 'Stop at the next light and put them out!'. Of course, that never happened, but it indicated to me that Carolyn had a lovely sense of humour. She was a



delightful lady, and I was pleased that she enjoyed coming to UUFO with us."

From Allison: "Carolyn was small and feisty, and one got the feeling there were mountains inside her brain. The feeling that stuff was being accomplished even if we couldn't see it. I have been inside Carolyn's home, her walls and shelves full of art and history and books; she had a rich, creative life. Her obituary says: 'Possessed of a beautiful singing voice, in her later years [Carolyn] was prone to suddenly burst into song.'

"It was kind of Janet to bring her to us so often on Sundays. I loved chatting with Carolyn during coffee hour—there would be three of us around the plate of sweets balanced on her knee: Me, Carolyn, and the sparkle in her eyes. She had spent her life loving, and feeling, and risking her heart. She left a deep impression on our Fellowship, filled at the moment with sadness, our loss is so new."

Carolyn's full obituary is available online at the [Ottawa Citizen](#).

HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSURES:

Sarah will be out of the office
December 25-January 2

Worship Cluster Notes

By Pat Lucey

The Winter Holiday season is here, and we'll be celebrating together!

December Services: On December 3rd, we'll put up our tree and decorate it during our Mitten Tree service with your gifts of mittens, hats, and scarves for children in our neighbourhood. December 10th will be our Blue Christmas service, in which we'll reflect upon and explore the wider range of feelings which can come up at this time of year. And then on December 17th, we'll have our annual "dark night" celebration of the Winter Solstice, when we gather at 4 p.m. to welcome the return of the light. Following the service, we'll dine together at our solstice potluck feast – always a festive and joyous occasion.

There will be no Sunday service on Christmas Eve, December 24th, but on New Year's Eve, December 31st, we'll open the Sanctuary on Sunday morning for a brunch party – games and fun and music and a potluck meal to welcome in the new year!



Creating and leading our 2024 services: As we consistently remind

ourselves, we're a lay-led congregation, and as such, it's in all of our hands to plan, create, and lead our Sunday services – this is a significant part of our shared ministry. It's truly a community effort, and everyone is invited to take part in creating worship services.

If you have some interest in being part of a planning team for a particular service or topic, you should talk to some experienced service leaders about how you can get involved. Mentoring service leaders is part of what we do in the Worship Cluster – if you're new to creating or leading a service, we always have your back.

Many experienced service leaders will tell you that there are both spiritual and practical rewards which come from creating and leading services. Choosing words and music which will help a group reflect on a chosen topic will lead you into a deeper and broader understanding of that topic, and will help you to develop your understanding of the dynamics involved in communicating meaning to other people. If you're new to speaking in front of an audience, it really builds your confidence to speak in front of our friendly and supportive Sunday morning attendees. And if you're more interested in the planning and creating end of things, you can develop and improve your writing and organizing skills while working with a small team of Fellowship members and friends. For some of us, creating and leading Sunday services is a pretty enjoyable and rewarding way to participate in our Fellowship's shared ministry. So please – don't hesitate to consult us if you'd like to explore how you might get involved in our collective Sunday morning shared ministry!

Worship Cluster Team: Sarah Baxter (Worship Coordinator), Lucie-Marie Castonguay-Bower, Laura Evans (Board liaison), Pat Lucey (cluster contact), Katie Lunn, Martha Nabatian, Nancy Rubenstein.

Nourishing Our Spirit

With Evangeline Danseco

Spirituality Retreat

December 28, 10am—12pm

There seems to be no end to terrible news in our world today. Political conflicts, wars, the climate crisis, the lack of affordable housing, increasing incidence of mental illnesses and drug overdoses, and the ongoing impact of systemic racism are just some of the issues grabbing our attention and breaking our hearts. What do you do when faced with all these? How do you cope with all the suffering and challenges? Where do you find strength, energy and optimism to move beyond flight, fight or freeze, beyond despair and into hope, wise action and welcoming grace?

If you are like me, I try to go find action within my sphere of influence that is meaningful. Yet there are times when I feel impotent, frustrated and burnt-out. When I sense this despair and hopelessness begin to creep in, I have learned that it is usually time to re-connect with my compass and with others. It is time to nourish my spirit.

I was seven years old when I discovered the quiet of our school chapel in my Catholic school back in the Philippines. Instead of playing with my friends during recess, I would often retreat to the chapel, staring at the sanctuary lamp, enamoured at this symbol of the presence of God. I have since embraced the Unitarian chalice – a symbol of the light within each of us – and the silence offered by meditation practices to investigate thoughts and feelings as a way towards non-self.

It has been five years since I was ordained as an interfaith minister, and I continue to draw strength and inspiration from many traditions. I reflect on how these inform our identities and values, and find inspiration for actions and a deeper, broader perspective. Spirituality to me is a core compass to living, an integral part of our identity and a dynamic influence for our actions (or inaction).

This December 28th, between Christmas and the New Year celebrations, I would like to spend a couple of hours reflecting with others, taking a pause from the hectic holiday season. I am hoping to have time to reflect on what spirituality means to us, re-discover our compass, and re-connect with each other. Let's get together to listen deeply on what Life may be calling us to do, as we welcome the new year. I hope you'll join me in this re-connection and nourishing of our spirits.



Meaning Making Discussion Series



In October, a small group sat down with facilitators Laura Evans and Sarah Baxter to watch and discuss a talk by Canadian ministers Rev.

Danielle Webber and Rev. Debra Faulk. The topic was reciprocity, and the cycle of generosity (giving) and gratitude (receiving).

It was the first of a series of discussions that are set to take place throughout the year, with a variety of topics and reflections sparking our discussion by a number of Canadian UU ministers. With topics ranging from artificial intelligence to the wisdom carried in our bodies, the discussions are sure to be varied and interesting!

Whether you can attend one or all, sign up by contacting ARE@uuf.org.

We are picking a variety of dates and times so everyone can hopefully find a time that works for you to attend.

December 6 (Wednesday), 10am, Conference Room

“In this polarized world ... can we just talk?”

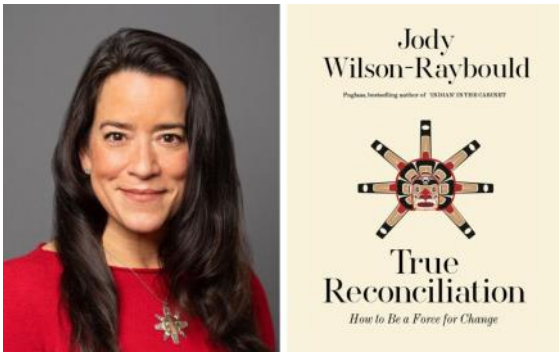
By Rev. Brian Kiely

Conversation has become a dangerous thing! Will I offend you if I speak? Will I get attacked for voicing an opinion? Speaking is becoming scary. Unitarian Universalists have always prided themselves on freedom and rational discourse. I believe it's the only way out of this polarized age.

January 27 (Saturday), 1pm, Conference Room

“To be or not to be ... and Chat GPT” by Rev. Karen Fraser Gitlitz

The advent of AI and chatbots has opened a whole new area of ethics. In what ways is artificial intelligence pushing us to strengthen our ethical and theological muscles? What do our answers to these questions say about our understanding of what it means to be human, especially the ways in which this understanding impacts our relations with other humans and with the other-than-human world.



Book Discussion:

True Reconciliation
Jody Wilson-Raybould

Saturday, February 3, 1pm

Facilitators: Nanci Burns & Tom Shillington

Where are you at in learning, doing and acting to address Indigenous issues in Canada? There is one question Canadians have asked Wilson-Raybould more than any other: *What can I do to help advance reconciliation?* Whether speaking as individuals, communities, organizations, or governments, people want to take concrete and tangible action that will make real change. They just need to know how to get started, or how to take the next step. *True Reconciliation* is broken down into three core practices—Learn, Understand, and Act—that can be applied by individuals, communities, organizations, and governments. Come discuss this book, the ideas it presents and perhaps challenge yourself to take away a goal for what you can do now.

Adult RE Survey:

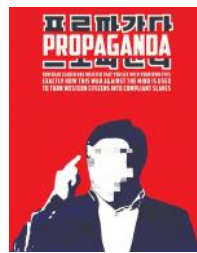
What Adult Learning Opportunities do you wish we would offer in 2024?

Send your topic / workshop suggestions to ARE@ufo.org

Movie Musings

By Michel Jan

This quarter we had a sometimes rocky road with the movies we watched in our Fellowship film group. In September we watched and discussed *Propaganda*, an anti-western culture film marketed as being from North Korea but really came from New Zealand. It made some good points; however, people found it too long. We also watched a short Tedx Talk by the director, Slavko



Martinov, in which he described the negative reaction he received from government and other organizations. We also watched *War Machine*, which is a funny movie with Brad Pitt playing a confident, determined General sent to win the hearts and minds of the Afghani people. People liked it.



In October we watched *Snowden* and *Age of Adaline*. Everyone liked *Snowden* but not *Age of Adaline*. *Snowden* is a detailed account of his escape from the United States and his interview with some reporters from top news organizations. *Age of Adaline* was about a woman who doesn't age, but instead of being an interesting exploration of the idea of not aging, it was just a formulaic romantic drama.



In November we watched and discussed *A Fish Called Wanda* and *Baby Driver*. Everyone liked *A Fish Called Wanda* and said it was genius, and no one liked *Baby Driver* because it is very violent.

We always welcome new participants in our Fellowship film group, so join us on the second Thursday of the month on Zoom. The information is in Friday Notes, including the movies we will discuss so people can watch them ahead of time.

COIN FRANÇAIS

Rassemblement Unitarien Universaliste d'Ottawa



Bienvenue à nos Célébrations francophones

Lucie-Marie Castonguay Bower

Prochaines célébrations :

17 décembre, à 16h30 nous nous joignons à la
Célébration bilingue du Solstice

28 janvier 2024, animée par Michel Boudreau
(annoncé dans les notes du vendredi)

C'est vraiment dans la joie et la fraternité que nous nous sommes retrouvés en septembre et octobre. L'animation énergique et la convivialité sont nos plus grands atouts de motivation, d'écoute, d'enrichissement spirituel. Si tu comprends le français, sois bien à l'aise de venir expérimenter avec nous cette oasis de grâce!



Cercle de croissance spirituelle

Après avoir eu le privilège de se rencontrer dans les jardins de Mère Nature nous devons accepter le confinement intérieur mais non l'ouverture de notre cœur et de notre esprit!

Nos thèmes sont toujours aussi emballants et profonds. C'est pourquoi, aujourd'hui, j'aime vous présenter quelques-unes des réflexions qui nous ont interpellées récemment.

Donner un sens à notre vie et du prix à notre quotidien.

Lorsque nous jetons un regard sur notre quotidien, est-ce que nous prenons le temps de ressentir ce que l'on fait et de la façon dont nous agissons? Le faisons-nous avec tout notre être, non seulement dans un acte routinier mais avec joie et attention? Sur ce, permettez-moi de partager la pensée de Renée Pelletier, (médecin, autrice, survivante de cancer,) concernant :

« Ce qui donne du prix à la vie »

« Ce qui donne du prix à la vie,
C'est d'avoir quelqu'un à qui parler quand on en a besoin,
C'est de déposer un baiser sur le front d'un enfant endormi,
C'est de donner la main à un parent âgé,
C'est de marcher pieds nus dans la rosée du matin,
C'est de contempler un coucher de soleil,
C'est de flatter le chien réclamant une caresse,
C'est d'écrire une lettre à un ami,
C'est de faire un sourire contagieux, quand le cœur est heureux,
C'est la maison accueillante et aux portes ouvertes,
C'est le repas tout simple à la saveur du partage,
C'est d'essuyer la larme qui coule sur la joue de notre mère,
C'est de serrer dans nos bras notre enfant devenu grand et lui dire je t'aime!
C'est de continuer d'avancer... malgré tout,
C'est de vivre l'aujourd'hui pour ce qu'il est.
Ce qui donne du prix à la vie, c'est tout ce qui donne un sens à la vie. »

J'aimerais partager une autre question avec vous :

« Est-ce qu'il y a quelque chose qui change en nous quand on trouve un sens caché à des expériences de vie désagréables ou souffrantes? »

Ne serait-ce pas là un cadeau déguisé?

Si parfois vous avez le temps et la bonté de me répondre, d'une façon ou d'une autre, je l'apprécierais énormément.

D'ici là, je *nous* souhaite beaucoup d'auto-compassion, de paix et de lumière.

Buffy Sainte-Marie—a Work of Art

By allison calvern

I liked Buffy Sainte-Marie when she was on Sesame Street, especially when she brought her baby boy, Cody, on set. That radical, pragmatic, talented woman breastfed that baby on tv, in 1977! I love her songs, and her particular singing voice.



Buffy Sainte-Marie and her son on Sesame Street

By taking pride in native ancestry, Buffy Sainte-Marie has been a powerful role model for Indigenous communities in both Canada and the United States. Music icon. Advocate. Sainte-Marie has won awards galore, that show how deeply she is admired for the work she does: An Academy Award; a Golden Globe Award; induction into Juno Awards Hall of Fame; being made an Officer of the Order of Canada; an Honorary Doctor of Laws; a Doctor of Fine Arts; a Governor General's Performing Arts Award; a Polaris Music Prize; a Juno Award; an Indigenous Music Award; a Polaris Heritage Prize. Buffy Sainte-Marie has been immortalized on a Canadian postage stamp. In 1997, she founded the Cradleboard Teaching Project, an educational curriculum devoted to better understanding Native Americans. In 2003 she became a spokesperson for the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network in Canada.

How are you feeling?

About the reports, the claims, the contradictions?

What do you find yourself holding onto,
or letting go of?



At 82 years of age, Buffy Sainte-Marie is a work of art.

She built her entertainment career on being Indigenous, claiming to have been born on the Piapot First Nation in the Qu'Appelle Valley in Saskatchewan. On October 27th, 2023, Canada's tv program, *Fifth Estate*, presented documents and testimonies showing that Buffy Sainte-Marie was born to white parents in the town of Stoneham, Massachusetts. They also severely damaged her claim of being part of the sixties' scoop.

Say it ain't so, Joe.

All suspect now—her work; her image; the hope, pride, and accomplishment relating to Buffy Sainte-Marie. Suspect, but not necessarily lost. Perhaps we can find something to salvage in the questions before us. How do we gather truth? How do we lose it? Can we get back to it?

As individuals, we have all lied. Whether we are angry at Buffy Sainte-Marie, or angry at the *Fifth Estate*, or just plain heartbroken, we have all lied.

Consider Facebook. On it I mention my beautiful grandson, Oskar, but I am silent on my daughter, Rebecca, who is estranged. Consider how I update my profile photo. I pick from zoom images, which are blurry and a great camouflage for my wrinkles, age spots, and skin tags; or from iPhone selfies which are sharp—no wrinkle left out, no blemish forgotten. Like Buffy Sainte-Marie, I curate an illusion of my life. But it takes a lot of energy to protect an illusion.

Buffy Sainte-Marie is an elder; at the moment, she is in turmoil. We all have moments of turmoil. Sometimes we find the courage to free ourselves from the lies, big and little, that shape and imprison us. We need to handle one another gently—you, Buffy Sainte-Marie, and me—as we learn to post our spotted and wrinkled and true faces on Facebook, and to the world. ■

Who are the People in Your Neighbourhood??

Interview with Ottawa Shambhala Meditation Centre Director, Colin Cordner

By Nanci Burns, Roving Reporter

The Ottawa Shambhala Centre is one of Heartwood House's newest member groups. They have been using our UUFO Sanctuary for meditation groups three times a week since the start of November.

Can you briefly describe who you are and how you fit into this new community, for someone who hasn't heard of you.

The Ottawa Shambhala Meditation Centre is a charitable organization dedicated to fostering a sense of enlightened society. We do that by offering a secular, ecumenic refuge for the study and practice of meditation and asking the question of what it means to be awake and of service to the natural and human world.

How does your work serve the Ottawa community and/or Vanier area? Who uses this service?

We provide a safe and accommodating space for folks of all backgrounds and traditions (or none at all) to practice the art of being human, and becoming awake to the basic goodness of ourselves and others - while also learning to face the world's profound challenges with confidence, natural intelligence, and compassion. Our services are used equally by people just looking to practice and connect with other meditators, and those looking to formally study the Buddhist or Shambhala traditions.

What do you appreciate most about being a Heartwood Member organization?

We most appreciate being able to be elbow-to-elbow with many other people and organizations with the goal of cultivating community and fostering a good and just human society. It's simply marvellous.

Are you aware of any connections to UUFO or Unitarians?

We have had a number of volunteers over the years who have also practiced with the Unitarian fellowship. As the Buddha might say, we have an auspicious karmic connection.



Do you want to flag any role or program that may be of interest for our Unitarian Fellowship members?

In the coming months, we're hoping to relaunch our Heart of Recovery program, and perhaps offer children's programming. In the mean time, we have been happy to begin hosting regular sessions of meditation practice on Tuesday evenings and Sunday afternoons. We've also begun offering Learn to Meditate classes led by our teachers and will also be offering further courses and meditation retreats in the New Year. ☸

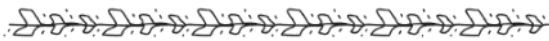
The OSMC invites everyone to join their meditation practice: check out their calendar at ottawa.shambhala.org





UniHeART Gallery

Our latest art exhibit is up now! We are showing a collaborative collection from the Ottawa Mixed Media Artist group. They are an independent, not-for-profit, volunteer run arts organization. Thank you to Elinor and Marina for installing the show!



Celebrating Partnership

In November, Heartwood House and UUFO celebrated our 10 years of partnership once again, with a ceremony recognizing all the work that went in to obtaining (and maintaining) the roof over our heads.

This photo includes members of the HH and UUFO boards past and present who were able to attend.



Fun With Finance Answer:

Snow clearing!

We never know how much snow winter will gift us, and heavy snow means a heavy snow plow bill!

PUB NIGHT

Fun, food, and good conversation with Fellowship friends!



Thursday
5:30 pm
Jan. 18th
Feb. 15th
Mar. 21st

We meet at Patty's Pub on 1186 Bank St. Everyone Welcome!

"Becoming Reacquainted"



33rd Unitarian Midwinter Retreat



@ Cedar Glen, February 2-4, 2024



Information: <http://uumidwinterretreat.blogspot.ca> or Helen Iacovino, Registrar at Midwinter@FirstUnitarianToronto.org

Add Your Voice!

We hope you enjoyed this issue of *Fellowship News!*

We are always happy to include new stories, ideas, and voices to our newsletter.

Ways to contribute:

Attend the newsletter planning meeting, take photos at UUFO events, write a reflection on a topic of interest, send in your Family News, share a copy with a friend!

OUR WORLD OF MUSIC by Michel Boudreau

Music is still a mystery to me. While it may appear like second nature to you when I pick up my guitar and belt out a song or two, I'm still amazed how music can so quickly move us to tears of joy or sadness just from hearing a few notes especially when combined with meaningful lyrics. In this column I would like to explore our appreciation of music in all its forms, the musicians who create it, and generally muse about music.

Sometimes music unexpectedly stirs up feelings inside of us. I was probably three or four years old and somewhere in the vicinity of the kitchen of the house I grew up in. The radio perched atop the refrigerator was filling the kitchen with music as my mother was milling about. I was suddenly arrested by what I heard. The sounds coming from the radio were different than usual yet pleasant. It evoked a measure of sadness but not overwhelmingly. My mother told me the song was The Teddy Bears' Picnic which has an intriguing melody and minor chords. It was really the minor chords that awoke something in me. The feeling was innate, and I have since always been drawn to minor chords. They are more mysterious than major chords. I find they insinuate suspense.

The bulk of my musicality comes from playing the guitar and singing. The only "formal" training in music was taking piano lessons for about a year when I was eleven. For lack of commitment on my part I stopped. Picked up the guitar two years later and the rest is history.

I've always learnt covers (songs from other musicians and artists) but I did write a few

songs between 1995 and 2000 about my Acadian culture. I currently exercise my musical chops by performing

at various open mics and other such venues. I have never played professionally.

But my musicality and music appreciation go much deeper. I am attracted to many different styles of music from classical to pop, rock and roll, world music, country and western, jazz, Motown, funk, and Latin. I've even been to a couple of contemporary electronic music venues. This latter style very much explores the boundaries of what might be considered traditionally melodic music against sounds created primarily by electronic equipment or instruments. Typically, when electronic equipment is involved, the sound/music is played loud and long. The high volume is a part of its musicality. The desired effect is a form of hypnotic state.

I am very much drawn to percussion music. As most would agree it's visceral. It literally moves you! Think African music, rock and roll, Latin, disco, funk and so on. Love it! Can't stand still when it plays.

There is so much more that I could say about music, but I will end by saying that when I need a loud-raise-the-roof-fill-your-house-with-music fix I play *The Best of Steely Dan*. Complex jazz-rock-funk with intricate chord progressions, slick keyboard playing and electric guitar picking and lots of rhythm and vocals. (Definitely not Leonard Cohen.) Try it, you might like it.

Stay tuned for my next article on musical musing with another individual of the UUFO. ♦



Michel plays guitar and sings with Caroline Balderston Parry in 2018



Katie and Michel take the open mic at Good Prospects Brewery, fall 2023

Bringing Music to UUFO: Ottawa Woodwind Project Autumn Concert

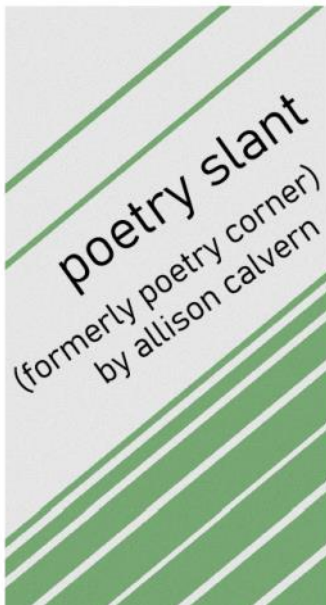


On November 11th we were pleased to welcome the OWP, organized by Adrian Cosstick, for an evening of music.



On October 21, 2023, the sanctuary and zoom held UUFO Writers' First Annual International Literary Salon. International because—we are international. Besides Andrea, Carolle, Janet, Liane, and Diane from Canada, we are Gustavo from Bolivia, Pat and Dan from USA, Bahram from Iran, and me, from Bermuda. We are International in birth and interconnected in the spirit of this mysterious universe.

The audience listened attentively while UUFO Writers gave a recital, each of us reading eight minutes of our writing. One of us convinced a few neighbours to attend. I mention one of these neighbours because, after the reading, as I walked by, I heard him say: "That was wonderful."



We thought it was wonderful, too! With thanks to Frances and Michel who served the wine, cheese, and chocolates; to Milan who handled the music; to Pat and Gary who took care of all the technical details.

Literature has always crossed borders; it has always crossed genres; and it has always entertained us. Here is a story-poem that opened the evening:



My Next Life

—by George Carlin, 1937 – 2008

I want to live my life backwards: You start out dead and get that out of the way. Then you wake up in a nursing home feeling better every day.

Then you get kicked out for being too healthy.

Enjoy your retirement and collect your pension.

Then when you start work, you get a gold watch on your first day. You work 40 years until you're too young to work.

You get ready for High School: drink alcohol, party, and you're generally promiscuous.

Then you go to primary school, you become a kid, you play, and you have no responsibilities.

Then you become a baby, and then . . . you spend your last 9 months floating peacefully in Spa-like conditions—central heating, room service on tap, and then . . .

You finish off as an orgasm.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa

Everyone Welcome | Bienvenue à tous

The Unitarian Fellowship of Ottawa is a spiritual community of people with shared values and diverse beliefs.

We are guided by the warmth of love, the light of reason, and the call of justice.

We come together to nurture meaning, hope, and reverence for the earth as we pursue a more just and compassionate world.

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Fellowship News

is published quarterly by UUFO

Send submissions, comments, or letters to the editors to:

newsletter@uufu.org

Submissions for the Spring Issue are due February 15

Many thanks to our contributors and editors!

Editorial Team

Allison, Nanci, Pat,
Sarah



Winter at UUFO

Potlucks

December 17 Solstice Potluck

Workshops & Discussions

December 6 Meaning Making Discussion 2 "In these polarized times... Can we just talk?"

December 28 Nourishing Your Spirit—Morning Retreat

January 27 Meaning Making Discussion 3 "To be or not to be... and ChatGPT"

February 3 Book discussion: True Reconciliation by Jody Wilson-Raybould

Special Events

December 31 New Years Eve Brunch Party Potluck!

Monthly Activities

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
(Worship)				Cercle de croissance spirituelle (UUFO)		Meditation Circle (UUFO)
(Worship)	Board Mtg (Hybrid)			Film Club (Zoom)	Writer's Group (UUFO)	
(Worship)				Pub Night (Patty's)		Meditation Circle (Zoom)
(Worship) (Célébration francophone)						
(Worship)						

Weekly event info & Zoom links come to your inbox in our Friday Notes!