

# Red River Ramblings

Volume 6, Issue 9

October, 2009

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church  
 ...a home for religious liberals in Southern Oklahoma and North Texas.

## A Month of Sundays

Inside this issue:

Calendar, Birthdays	2
Member News	3
Gather Photographs, Religious Education	4
Board Bits, Treasurer's Report	5
Message from Marla	6
Caring Circle, Social Action	7
Chalice Circles	8

**October 4th**

**Steve Brooks**

**Pundamentalism**

Austin UU folksinger/songwriter Steve Brooks leads this deceptively lighthearted look at the history and spiritual significance of the lowly pun. Steve is a six time champion of Austin's O. Henry Pun-Off. This service includes celebrated punsters, from Shakespeare to Jesus, as well as selections from his award winning routines, "Carstianity" and "Tex-Mexistentialism".

**October 11th**

**Maithri Muddasani and Arthi Vasudevan**

**Dawali**

Dawali, the Hindu festival of lights, is celebrated each year in India at this time. Two local

Hindu women, Maithri Muddasani and Arthi Vasudevan, will be leading us in an authentic Dawali service, which celebrates Lakshmi, the goddess of light and wealth. Please take advantage of our unique opportunity to experience this ancient ritual.

**October 18**

**David Roth**

Singer David Roth joins us today with his unique songs, off-beat observations, moving stories, and powerful singing and subject matter. Sit back and enjoy this exceptional musician and keynote speaker, who has earned top honors at various premier songwriting competitions and has taken his unique and inspiring music to a variety of venues and countries for over two decades.

**October 25**

**Megan Dalby Jones**

**United Nations Sunday**

Megan Dalby-Jones, a frequent, and favorite guest speaker at RRUU, returns today with a service recognizing the importance and significance of United Nations Sunday. Join us to hear what Megan has to say about the special UU event, which recognizes the birth of the United Nations on October 24th, 1945.



Adult Forum  
 Worship & Children's RE

10:00am  
 11:15am

## Calendar of Events

October, 2009

2 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

2 - Fri, 7 pm - UJJAM, music

3 - Sat, 6 pm - MOVEABLE FEAST, dinner at  
The Cameron's in Pottsboro

7 - Wed, 7 pm - Town Hall Meeting

9 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

9 - Fri, 7:30 pm - UJJAM meets at SCP for  
"Always...Patsy Cline"

11 - Sun, 12:30 pm - Town Hall Meeting

13 - Mon, 6:30 pm - Board Meeting

20 - Tues, 7:30 pm - GREEN TEAM, environ-  
mental

16 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

17 - Sat, 7:00 p.m. - David Roth in concert at  
Harmony House. Contact Faye Wedell -  
903-583-2661

18 - Sun, 12:30 p.m. - Town Hall Meeting

23 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

30 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

.....  
All November newsletter submissions  
are due to  
[newsletter@rruu.org](mailto:newsletter@rruu.org)  
by October 24th, at 12:00 p.m.  
.....

## Always, Patsy Cline

...is on stage at the Finley Playhouse during the month of October. Our own *Dan Altoff* is playing the keyboard in the onstage band. You will not want to miss this delightful evening of country music! Call the Sherman Community Players box office for reservations.

## October Birthdays

1 - Kathy Whisman

5 - Allyson Caves

5 - Marion Hill

10 - Carolyn Barrow

15 - Alex Dunn

23 - John Ockels

24 - Darrah Dunn

24 - Robert Mease

26 - Ken Fletcher

26 - Carla Murphy

28 - Hisae Shaw

31 - Tamara Mease



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



Green Team  
Tip of the Month  
October, 2009

Americans purchase more than 30 million bottles of water every year. More than 75% of those bottles are not recycled and end up in the landfill. Use a refillable water bottle to avoid this form of waste.

## Member News

### Logo Committee

The logo committee met for the second time and will have a variety of logos to look at for the Town Meetings. Anyone who is interested in creating their own logo is welcomed to have one ready for viewing by that time. They can send them to Kris Riek, Logo Facilitator, at kris\_riek@yahoo.com.

**FunRaising** at Wesley Village on Oct 17th: Marla will be playing with the RR Valley Dulcimer Club at noon and Jan Fletcher will be singing karaoke at 11 am. There will be activities from 10 - 3, including face painting, food, crafts, exhibits, raffles, and a silent auction. Wesley Village is the only non-profit retirement and assisted living facility in North Texas.

### An Invitation from Jeannine Hatt

As fellow religiously liberal minded folks, I would like to invite all those interested to attend an adult education class, which will be held at Waples United Methodist Church (located at 830 W. Main Street in Denison) on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., beginning this Thursday, September 17. Called "Living the Questions", the course, led by Waples pastor, the Rev. Mike Nichols, will look at the Bible from a non-fundamentalist perspective. This Thursday is an introduction to the study so would be a good way to get an overview of what the series will be like. It runs in 2 seven week sections, and the plan is for it to be each Thursday evening.

I have read some of the curricula, and it looks interesting and engaging. I hope that some of you will be able to participate. My husband Chuck and I will be there. The statement below is from the Living the Questions website and might help give an idea of the focus of the curricula.

*"Many know that, at its core, Christianity has something good to offer humanity. At the same time, many have a sense that they are alone in being a "thinking" Christian and that "salvaging" Christianity is a hopeless task. What is needed is a safe environment where people have permission to ask the questions they've always wanted to ask but have been afraid to voice for fear of being thought a heretic.*

*Living the Questions is a source of curriculum and media for both seekers and "church alumni/ae" convinced that Christianity still has relevance in the 21st Century. Providing a variety of flexible resources, Living the Questions can help people explore the future of Christianity and what a meaningful faith can look like in today's world."*

## Some People to Thank...

Thanks to *Tim Riek* the wheels on the carts go 'round and 'round! We appreciate the new, heavy duty wheels installed on the entryway furnishings stored in the sanctuary and wheeled in and out every week.

Special kudos to *Marla Loturco* for all of her work setting up the excellent workshop led by Daniel Polk, President of the North Texas Association of Unitarian Universalist Societies (NTAUUS) and for making the arrangements for our Healing Circle led by Mary Borden of the Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference of the UUA.

Every week two people jointly tally our offerings, double check each others' count and prepare the locked bag for bank deposit. For some years our faithful "bean counters" have been *Doyle Adams* and *Marion Hill*. Give them a "thank-you" soon and offer to help do the count if one of them cannot be at RRUU some Sunday!

**Hat's off to *The Cameron's of Chalice Art*** for making special jewelry available to those who attended the Dwight Brown Leadership Experience this year and donating the proceeds to RRUU.

A round of applause to *Chalice Circle Coordinator Jan Fletcher*, the coordinators of the various Circles and our Committee Chairs for a great Participation Fair! If you were **unable to attend, please see Jan for a "Time and Talent"** sheet to express your interest in various groups at RRUU.

The new door keys at RRUU work thanks to *L. D. Clark* who changes out the building lock on the glass doors. **It's a breeze** now to keep our space secure.

Thank you to *all* who made our Christmas in July event a success! An estimated 25% of our members, and several of our friends, contributed items to our church during this time of giving. We have received gifts of office supplies, postage, books, educational materials, food, kitchen items, name badge magnets, and more. If you participated and didn't turn in a tag, please mention it to the membership team (Carla, Amy, Shann, Jan) so that we can record a more accurate % of participation. You may be seeing our Scuba Angel tree next year!



## Gather Pictures of Loved Ones For Remembering Together

*Sunday Service, November 1st*



Drawing on the German Evangelical tradition of Totenfest, the Mexican *Los Dias de los Muertos*, the Roman Catholic celebrations of All Saint's and All Soul's Days and the Chinese *Ching Ming* Festival, the family that is Red River Unitarian Universalist will celebrate at time of remembering together on Sunday morning the first of November. Rev. Dianna Niemann-Harris will fill our pulpit that day and lead us in a unique service of joyful remembrance.

Members and friends of RRUU are invited to provide photos (digital or prints to be scanned) for inclusion in this special service. We are looking for pictures of mothers, fathers, grandparents, children, siblings, friends and/or beloved pets who have passed from this way of being in to whatever follows.

Each photo should be accompanied with the following in writing please:

Name and phone number of the person submitting the photo.

Name of the person pictured and her/his relationship to you

If you are submitting more than one photo, numerically order the pictures. Number one is the photo you most want included, second choice number two, and so on.

Since many of the pictures will need to be scanned, please do not delay in gathering yours and bringing them to RRUU. Please bring your photos and the information requested above in a sealed envelope and place it in the Treasurer mailbox in the rear of the sanctuary near the Board of Trustees bulletin board. Digital photos along with the requested information may be sent to [Treasurer@rruu.org](mailto:Treasurer@rruu.org)

Photos received after October 18 cannot be incorporated into the service, so please submit yours as soon as possible!

## Children's Religious Education



Teacher Helen Schulze has begun the study of the UUA curriculum, *Learning and Living the UU Principles*, with the children of RRUU. Children's RE begins after the children are sung out by the congregation. Snack and a drink are provided, and there is a huge emphasis on having FUN!

Anyone interested in helping should speak with Helen at the church on Sunday morning.

## Adult Forum

Anyone who wants to develop a meditation practice or improve an existing meditation practice, feels a need



for deeper spirituality, or simply wants to live a more deliberate life will want to join Adult Forum while we explore *Living by Heart*. *Living by Heart* is a workbook and DVD by Rev. Dr. Laurel Hallman, former lead minister of First Unitarian Church of Dallas, based on the devotional practices of Rev. Harry Scholefield. The twelve sessions each introduce a different meditative practice that is designed to heighten awareness and being in the moment. Attendance at any of the earlier sessions is not required, and workbooks will be made available as needed for a fee of \$10.

October 4 The Nourished Heart: Poetry

October 11 The Just Heart: Action

October 18 The Mortal Heart: Death

October 25 The Grateful Heart: Praise

## Board Bits

What your board did at their last meeting  
(September 15, 2009)



We were all present except for one. We started the meeting at 6:40 p.m. with a check in. We went home at 9:05 p.m.

L.D. Clark acted as our Process Observer and timekeeper for the meeting.

Minutes were approved for the last meeting. Reports were accepted.

Still have many leadership positions open and all on the board are going to be looking for people who would volunteer to fill those positions including the Safe Congregation Panel. No volunteers as a result of the participation fair.

Final discussion of plans for the Healing Circle on September 26th with Margaret Borden from Austin Texas as mediator.

Set up dates for three town hall meetings and one congregational meeting.

Town Hall Meetings:

Wednesday, October 7, 2009 at 7:00 PM  
Sunday October 11, 2009 at 12:30 PM  
Sunday October 18, 2009 at 12:30 PM

Congregational Meeting:

Sunday November 8, 2009 at 12:30 PM

Jim Murphy presented first revision of the bylaws to the board, asked for input to be emailed to committee. Need to have the following data ready for the Town Hall Meetings:

By-Laws – rewritten by the bylaws committee  
Budget – 2009-2010 revised  
Congregational Behavioral Covenant  
Green Policy from Green Team  
Current 5 year plan  
Short term plan

Reviewed current to-do lists of individual board member projects

Amy Hoffman-Shehan is going to write a proposed policy for building use

For a Policy & Procedures manual - Committees will be asked to write a definition of what their committees are tasked to do. Also the description of the Chair duties and the volunteers duties. This may be based on the policy from Wildflower Church in Austin.

Jim Murphy will write a maintenance manual for the building as the

past chair and will be consulting with the current building chair.

Dianna Niemann-Harris will work with the Finance Committee to develop a Financial Policy and Procedures Guidelines.

Marla Loturco will put together a Board Manual and a short term plan with all of the current activities.

All board members are working on revising the budget based on the current pledges.

If you would like to see the full board minutes – they will be posted **on the “Board Board” in the back of the Sanctuary as soon as it is available.** The next board meeting is October 13th, starting at 6:30 p.m. Board meetings are open to all, if you wish to be on the agenda please contact a board member. Deadline for the agenda is October 9. **Those wishing a few minutes during the “open mic” will want to be ready to speak near the end of the meeting.**

## Treasurer’s Report

September, 2009

RRUU members and friends continue to support the ministry of this fellowship in powerful ways! In addition to hours of time and talent **freely given to advance our mission, financial and “in kind” giving** is also very positive at this point. Following is a synopsis of my **most recent treasurer’s report to the Board of Trustees.**

August revenue was \$3,537.39 with expenses of \$2,220.89 resulting in a net profit of \$1,136.50. In addition to these incomes, during August RRUU collected and gave \$246.20 to *Families Feeding Families* via our **“Second Sundays” cash giving and the total value of “gifts in kind” was \$2,735.05.**

At the request of Board, I have been reviewing pledges and income to date for FY2010. The purpose is to project a realistic income figure for a revised budget to be submitted for approval at our November 8, 2009 congregational meeting. Totaling currently honored pledges, average cash offerings and other regular non-pledged giving, \$37,185.00 is the appropriate income projection for the revised budget. Pledges of who have resigned membership and other pledges no longer being honored by members are not included in this figure.

**The October 11, 2009 “Second Sunday” offering will go to the Grayson County Foster Kid’s Halloween Party.** Please email [SocialAction@rruu.org](mailto:SocialAction@rruu.org) to share ideas and be a part of determining where *share the plate* offerings are given.

For questions you may email me at [treasurer@rruu.org](mailto:treasurer@rruu.org) or call 903-327-2069 and I will respond to you as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dianna Niemann-Harris  
RRUU Treasurer

## Message from Marla

Marla Loturco, President, RRUU



This month the Board and I ask for some of your time. We and several committees have been doing lots of work on your behalf and now want to talk it over with all of you prior to a voting congregational meeting on November 8, 2009. To this end we have scheduled three town hall meetings. We ask each voting member and any interested friends to attend at least one of these town hall meetings. The topics to be shared and discussed will include:

New Bylaws	2009-2010 Budget	Congregational Behavioral Covenant
Proposed RRUU Logos	Green Policy from Green Team	Current RRUU 5 year plan
Short Term Plan for RRUU	Issues that are open	

Each of these documents will be available at the first meeting if not before. The dates of the Town Meetings are:

October 7<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday – 7:00 PM

October 11<sup>th</sup> – Sunday – 12:30 PM

October 18<sup>th</sup> – Sunday – 12:30 PM

**It is important to me that RRUU is “our church”, the Board is simply acting on behalf of the congregation. The more input we receive from the congregation, the more RRUU becomes “our church”**

As I finish this letter I am just home from the Healing Circle which was held at the church tonight. Margaret Borden facilitated an extremely helpful experience to everyone who chose to attend. For those of you who missed it – our agenda for the evening was the following:

Introductions – name and statement of one thing we would like to have come out of the evening for ourselves.

Ground Rules / Guidelines – Goal is to understand others, what is said in the group stays in the group.

Feelings – I statements: I feel xxxxx. Not I feel xxxxx because of you

Needs – What do each of us need

Learnings – Anything new you learned tonight

Future – Helpful behaviors / Tools for the future

One thing which can be done tomorrow to promote healing and moving forward

As a group we agreed to share the Future information so I will show it the way our lists did.

Helpful	Tools for Future
Listening	Covenant (behavioral)
Clarifying (mis)interpretations & (mis)perceptions immediately	Trust in ourselves
Risk confronting (possible) conflict (the unknown)	<b>Let's get it done</b>
Courage to clarify	Build Bridges
Courage to Heal	Act Normal
Courage to start where we are and with what we have	Set Goals
Expressing feelings	Give benefit of doubt
Acknowledging feelings	Positive expectations
Being Authentic	Documentation (road map)
<b>“WE”, not “YOU”, or even not “I”</b>	Realistic budget & logo
Strength of community	Unrealistic dreams (vision)
Knowing others care	Be public, not hide
Going to the source	Reach out to larger community
	<b>Defining who “WE” are now</b>

Time presses – the newsletter deadline is fast approaching – I will leave you with one last request. The Board is committed to moving forward. Please support us in this endeavor by your participation.



He drew a circle that shut me out --  
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.  
But love and I had the wit to win:  
We drew a circle that took him in.

- Edwin Markham

The circle we draw provides help and hugs, a ride or a meal, a call or a visit. The Caring Team also draws a circle that includes everyone in our community. **The “YES, I’m happy to...” survey is the tool we use to assure that when needed, help is there. If you didn’t complete the survey during last month’s Participation Fair” don’t fret! The survey is now on the church’s web site.**

If you are reading your newsletter on your computer, just click here: [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=eSD3HK6ZTRw54aYKRKO5vA\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=eSD3HK6ZTRw54aYKRKO5vA_3d_3d) and take two minutes to say “yes to helping.” You can also find the survey by going to the UU Link page on the church web site and clicking Caring Circle Survey. We do this because we draw a circle that takes everyone in.

## World Hunger...

at the  
Grayson County  
Shelter

*A Social Action Opportunity*



If hunger in the world is a concern for you, here is an opportunity to make a difference! The Grayson County Shelter is seeking churches to provide dinner one night per month for their residents. Currently they are at capacity and have people living in cars waiting for room at the inn.

Grayson County Shelter, Inc. is a non-profit homeless shelter for displaced families which serves Grayson and surrounding counties in North Texas as well as the citizens of Southern Oklahoma. The shelter provides private family rooms in a clean, safe, family environment. It is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week. All services are provided free of charge to the clients.

We have an opportunity to participate in many ways with the current hunger crisis at the Grayson County Shelter. We have the option once a month to purchase food and drop it off, bring food ready to bake and let them bake it, bring meals ready to serve, or bring meals ready to serve and join the residents for dinner.

Please consider this need in light of the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism. Perhaps *the inherent worth and dignity of every person* includes hungry people waiting for shelter. Maybe *justice, equality and compassion in human relationships* includes bringing the food and coming to the table to join those in crisis. What if *the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all* could begin here in Grayson County?

After some time of reflection, please contact [SocialAction@rruu.org](mailto:SocialAction@rruu.org) or call acting chairperson Dianna Niemann-Harris at 903-327-2069 and express your willingness to shower justice, peace, dignity and equality by helping respond to this need.

*Our Social Action Committee works to educate and inspire RRUU members and friends about matters of social justice, to improve our community, and works with others to improve the larger society. We provide education programs, engage in letter writing campaigns, are involved in community events and seek to bring issues of social justice to the attention of the congregation. Our efforts are based on Unitarian Universalist principles that affirm the worth, dignity and human rights of every person. We seek to present a positive presence in the community. Please send an e-mail to [SocialAction@rruu.org](mailto:SocialAction@rruu.org) and join the team!*

## RRUU Chalice Circles: Which Small Group Is Right For You?

Chalice Circles are small groups of people who meet regularly for the purpose of getting to know one another while learning, discussing, and acting on topics of common interest. All members and friends are welcome! If you are interested in attending a particular circle, contact Circle Coordinator, Jan Fletcher, at [chalicecircles@rruu.org](mailto:chalicecircles@rruu.org).



**AGAPE**, a UU Christian Circle, meets the third Sunday of each month at the church at 12:45 pm. Next meeting is TBA. This circle needs a new facilitator. **ALL LIBERAL CHRISTIANS AND UUs WHO WANT WORSHIP WITH A CHRISTIAN FOCUS ARE WELCOME!**



**MI NDFULNESS**, a Meditation Circle, meets every Friday at noon at the home of Sue Wells in Whitesboro. Facilitator is Richard Newlin. **NEW AND EXPERIENCED MEDITATORS ARE AL-WAYS WELCOME.**



**FREETHI NKERS**, a Humanist Circle, is currently changing the meeting day. Next meeting is TBA. The group will be exploring the new Michael Moore film on Capitalism. Facilitator is Jim Gauthier. **ALL FREETHINKERS ARE WELCOME!**



**GREEN TEAM**, an Environmental Action Circle, meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the home of Amy Hoffman-Shehan in Sherman. Next meeting is Oct 20 to continue preparations for Earth Day **April, 2010. The theme will be "Green For Health" exploring the link between the health of our planet and our physical health.** They invite all to attend and work with them. Facilitator is Amy Hoffman-Shehan. **ALL THOSE WHO LOVE THE EARTH ARE WELCOME!**



**IT TAKES A VILLAGE**, a Circle of Parents Supporting Parents, meets on various dates at locations pertaining to the activity. Next meeting is a trip to continue kayaking on the Red River TBA for October. Facilitator is Gerry Shehan. **ALL FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ARE WELCOME!**



**MOVEABLE FEAST**, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle, meets on moveable dates at moveable locations. Next meeting will be Saturday, October 3 at the home of Bruce and Carolyn Cameron. Facilitators are Elbert & Marion Hill. **ANYONE WHO LOVES COOKING AND/OR EATING IS WELCOME!**



**PFFFT**, an Outdoor Activities Circle, meets each month on a Saturday. Next meeting is TBA. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. **ANYONE WHO LOVES THE OUTDOORS IS WELCOME!**



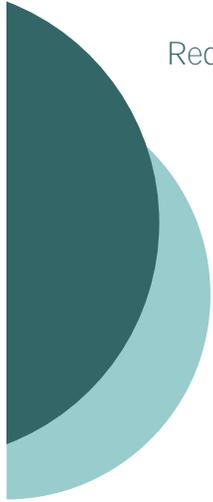
**RED RI VER EARTH SPI RIT**, a Nature-Based Spirituality Circle, meets seasonally at the Church. Next meeting is TBA. Facilitator is Penny Bertrand. **NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**



**UUJAM**, a Music-Making Chalice, meets the first Friday of each month at 7 pm at the home of Jan Fletcher in Sherman. Next meeting is Oct 2. Bring your instruments and songs to share. Members will also meet during October for a trip to SCP's "Always... Patsy Cline". Facilitator is Jan Fletcher. **ALL MUSIC MAKERS AND LISTENERS ARE WELCOME!**



**LAI D BACK BOOK GROUP**, a Book Reading and Discussion Interest Group, meets 4 to 6 weeks apart to discuss the selected reading and share insights. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. **ALL WHO ENJOY THOUGHTFUL LITERATURE ARE WELCOME!**



Red River Unitarian Universalist Church  
 ...a home for religious liberals in Southern Oklahoma and North Texas

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 E-mail: [info@rruu.org](mailto:info@rruu.org)

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**WWW.RRUU.ORG**

## Church Leadership

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### Board of Trustees

Marla Loturco,  
 President (2010)  
 Don Durland,  
 Vice-president (2010)  
 Dianna Niemann-Harris,  
 Treasurer (2010)  
 Amy Hoffman-Shehan,  
 Trustee-at-Large (2010)  
 Jim Murphy,  
 Trustee-at-Large (2010)  
 L. D. Clark,  
 Trustee-at-Large (2011)  
 Cynthia Evetts,  
 Secretary (2011)

### Committee on Ministry

Darrah Dunn, Elbert Hill

### Team Leaders

Worship: Darrah Dunn  
 Chalice Circles: Jan Fletcher  
 Adult Forum: Open  
**Children's Religious Education: Helen Schulze**  
 Youth Advisor: Open  
 Membership: Carla Murphy  
 Social Action: Dianna Niemann-Harris  
 Building and Grounds: Doyle Adams  
 Communications: Open  
 Caring: Kris Riek  
 Ways & Means: L.D. Clark  
 Hospitality: Open  
 Historian: Open  
 Newsletter: Cynthia Evetts & Shann Schubert  
 Website: Open