

Red River Ramblings

Volume 6, Issue 10

November, 2009

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

A Month of Sundays

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November 1

All Saint's Day

Dianna Niemann-Harris

November first the RRUU family will blend the tradition of the German "Totenfest", the Chinese "Ching Mind", and the Mexican "Dia de los Muertos" celebrating a Service of Remembrance. The service will be a sensory journey seeing faces of loved ones and hearing music to soothe and uplift. Readings will draw out the remembered smell of grandma's cookies or mother's fresh washed hair. We will touch our feelings of gratitude and perhaps clasp the hand of a neighbor as we remember. Come join the circle as we see how good it is to have been blessed with people, pets, and time and places to love and be loved. Also in this service we will celebrate the fullness of the circle of life, recalling those who touched our lives and moved on to the next way of being, and welcoming into our midst the new members who have come to RRUU. As the season for some relationships come to a close, the universe draws us forward into the delight of new beginnings....



November 8

Reverend Don Fielding

Reverend Don Fielding, a retired UU minister and a former pastor of the Denton UU fellowship, will be joining us today. No sermon topic was available at the time of publication, but it has been said of Rev. Feilding that you never quite know what to expect. So arrive expecting to be blessed with something delightfully unexpected.

November 15

John Ockels, RRUU Children

John Ockels and the children of RRUU will present this special service which focuses on the importance of the young people within our church community. These important "church-leaders-in-training" will help with the service by leading singing, doing special readings, facilitating our spoken affirmations, and collecting the offering. Please plan to be part of this marvelous opportunity to teach our children. Let's pack the house and let them speak to us.



November 25

Thanksgiving Service

The Worship Committee

The Worship Committee will lead this Thanksgiving-themed service filled with readings, stories, and thoughts about gratitude. Explore with them what it means to be truly grateful. After the service, worship will continue in the Fellowship Hall as we dine on a pot-luck Thanksgiving feast. Celebrate the blessings of community and friendship as we think and eat together.

November 29

5th Sunday

UUJam

Prepare your spirit and help us prepare RRUU for the December Holidays. UUJAM presents a service of Seasonal Songs and Stories to set the mood for our first "Hanging of the Greens". Music represents major memories for Christmas, Yule and Hannukah celebrations each generation. Come sing a song and "Deck the Hall" with UUJAM.



Adult Forum
 Worship & Children's RE

10:00am
 11:15am

Calendar of Events

November, 2009

1 - *Time change (set the clock to 'fall back')*

1 - Sun, 11:15 - New Member Welcoming Service; New Member Brunch immediately following the service

6 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

6 - Fri, 7 pm - UUUJAM, music

7- Sat, 9 am- Take a trip to The Nature & Science Museum in Dallas, IT TAKES A VIL-LAGE, family

8 - Sun, 12:45 pm - CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

10 - Tues, 6:30 pm - Board Meeting

13 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

17 - Tues, 7:30 pm - GREEN TEAM, environmental

20 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

22- Thanksgiving Feast (potluck), immediately following church

26 - THANKSGIVING

27 - Fri, noon - MINDFULNESS, meditation

29 - Sun, UUJAM Service and Hanging of the Greens

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All December newsletter submissions are due to

newsletter@rruu.org

by November 28th, at 12:00 p.m.

Please do not format your submissions, but send them in plain text. Punctuation and paragraphing is all we need. Your cooperation will facilitate a smooth translation from your software to ours! Thank you!

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November Birthdays

5 - Claudette Galen

6 - Anabelle Dunn

6 - Shann Schubert

7 - Laura Shehan

8 - Dan Althoff

8 - Carolyn Cameron

8 - Allen Shaw

13- Marla Loturco

13- Maura Shehan

15- Doyle Adams

15- Kris Riek

16 - Sylvia Lawrence

17 - Berniece Melvin

22- Peter Schulze

23 - True Shaw



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

OOPS...last month's newsletter inadvertently missed a birthday in the list. October 21st **Don Durland** celebrated 75 years of living in this delightful, frustrating, loving, challenging, gracious, messy world. Happy belated, Don...we are glad you were born!



Green Team Tip of the Month October, 2009

Shop at thrift stores. Not only will you save money, but you will also not be responsible for the energy consumption necessary for producing and transporting new clothing, household items and furniture.

Member News

Thanksgiving Feast

On November 22 we will have a church-wide Thanksgiving potluck feast following our worship service. Sign-up sheets will be posted at the church beginning November 1st. Please plan to begin your Thanksgiving celebration by feasting with your fellow RRUU church members, and sign up early so that the hospitality committee knows what fabulous dish you plan to contribute.



AUTHOR'S LUNCHEON ON NOVEMBER 9 AT POTTSBORO LIBRARY:

RRUU mystery novelist **Marion Moore Hill** will appear at several venues in the next few weeks:

On November 9, 11:30 a.m., she'll be luncheon speaker at Pottsboro Public Library, 104 N. Main St., Pottsboro, TX. Luncheon is free (sponsored by Friends of Library), but guests must sign up at the library beforehand. Space is limited so call 903-786-8174 and make your reservations by no later than November 5. Or, attendees may hear the talk without participating in the luncheon. Hill will discuss her most recent novel, DEADLY DESIGN.

On December 3, 12:30, she will speak at a brown-bag luncheon at Robert L. Williams Public Library, Fourth and Beech Sts. in Durant, OK. Participants will bring their lunches, and Friends of Library will provide cookies and water. Open to the public. Hill will discuss her most recent novel, DEADLY DESIGN.

On December 5, 11-2, she'll sign copies of all of her four novels, BOOKMARKED FOR MURDER, DEATH BOOKS A RETURN, DEADLY WILL, and DEADLY DESIGN, at Hastings Book Store, 2114 Texoma Parkway, Sherman, TX.

Hill's website, which includes information about all her novels, is at www.marionmoorehill.com.

November Thanks-giving

Hat's off to Jim Murphy who checked our website from his temporary living space in China, discovered it had been hacked and immediately contacted our Board President to report the issue. Also thanks to Richard Newlin for quick thinking in passing the website message along to Amy Hoffman-Shehan who arranged for Internet Texoma to close down the site until it could be reset correctly.

Many thanks to the Board of Trustees for three exceptional Town Hall Meetings for discussion of various pieces of business and a smooth, appropriate and productive congregational meeting!

Carla Murphy is due a tip of the hat this month for being "substitute NTAUUS representative" attending the October 17 meeting in Denton on behalf of Jim Murphy who was in China on business.

Kudos to the team of Cameron, Cameron, Newlin, Loturco, Murphy, Murphy and Harris who compiled, copied and collated information for the special congregational meeting. The crew also stuffed envelopes, applied labels and postage and mailed out materials to members for review prior to the meeting. The efforts of many "behind the lines" keep RRUU functioning as a spiritual community...and all of us are grateful!

Blessings and many thanks to each one of our weekly Worship Associates! The Worship Team is delighted to help nurture, teach, support and offer guidance to any member or friend who would like to serve as a Worship Associate. Please talk with Darrah Dunn or Dianna Niemann-Harris or email your interest and contact information to worshipcommittee@rruu.org

And grateful thanks-giving to *Insert Your Name Here* for visiting the entryway bulletin board and signing up to provide flowers, bring refreshments and set-up/clean-up for fellowship time and volunteering to be a greeter before services. These are "every Sunday" needs at RRUU which happen because everyone takes a turn!

And yet again, copious gratitude to Shann Schubert and Cynthia Evetts for creating, arranging and publishing our incredible RRUU newsletter every month! Your efforts keep us in touch and in the know about this delightful faith community.



E-mail Etiquette Tip of the Month

Don't reply to an e-mail message when angry, as you may regret it later. Once the message has been sent, you will not be able to recover it. E-mail means "eternal memory."

Hanging of the Greens

November 29th



Start looking for items to share and mark your calendars for decorating our sanctuary for the holiday season. The time is right after fellowship hour and the place is 102 E. Harrison! Everyone is invited to bring finger foods for a light luncheon and we shall then deck the sanctuary with the signs and symbols of the season.

Because of our diversity in beliefs and our open acceptance of all spiritual thought, the worship team is seeking any and all contributions of decorations. For Yule we need abundant greenery, especially holly and Yule logs. Images or statues of Buddha are needed for Bodhi Day. We need menorahs for the Chanukah area and if anyone has realistic stuffed animals (goat, sheep and/or camel) these will add to the Eid al-Adhae decorations. Nativity sets, lights and tree decorations are also needed for the Christmas area. Particularly we are in need of "ropes" of green garland to draw the decorations together.

A description of the holiday celebrated will be at each of the areas for all of us to share and learn. On December 6, our morning worship will flow around the various holidays that celebrate this season of expectation and warmth in so many world religions.

Plan now to attend and please talk with Dianna Niemann-Harris or email worshipcommittee@rruu.org to let the organizers of this event know what things you can bring to add to the sense of festival in our sanctuary!

Poinsettias and Holly Plants



To help decorate our sanctuary for the holiday season, the worship committee will be selling poinsettias and holly plants. You may purchase these items in honor or in memory of a loved one to be listed in the bulletin and newsletter.

Details are still in process with suppliers and it appears we will be able to supply poinsettias for about \$20 and holly for about \$30. Please watch the weekly announcements page on Sundays and the Wednesday email updates for more details as they become available. In addition to being a way to grace our space during the season, there will be income to the church from this project to help off-set budgeted or unexpected expenses.

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



Sunday Nov 1st

The Eleventh Commandment: Thou Shall Not Commit Apathy

Honestly, now, how much do you really know about Tuesday's TX State-Wide Constitutional Amendment election? (There is no election in Oklahoma this fall.) How many amendments are up for a vote? Any idea which ones you like or hate? What influences your decision? Sunday, Nov 1st Adult Forum will take a look at all 11 amendments as we delve into what we feel about each. An informed voter is a better voter, come learn as much as you can (or need) in order to be sure you're voting what you feel is best. The goal is to inform, not to campaign!

Adult Forum returns to its study of *Living By Heart* on November 8th. *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 remaining topics are:

November 8: The Responsive Heart: Reciprocity

November 15: Living by Heart: The Singing Rover

November 22: The Creative Heart: Developing Your Own Practice

Board Bits

What your board did at their last meeting

(October 13, 2009)



* We enjoy great participation on the board – all were in attendance except for Jim, who, while in China, was with us in spirit. Darrah Dunn was our invited guest for several of the discussions. We started at 6:45 pm and went home shortly after 9:00 pm. No other members of the congregation were present.

* Amy Hoffman-Shehan acted as our Process Observer and timekeeper for the meeting.

Minutes were approved for the last meeting and reports were accepted.

* Jim Gauthier and Suzanne Durland have accepted positions on the Safe Congregation Panel and the first meeting is set for November 3.

* Historian, Hospitality and Adult Forum positions will be discussed at the Congregational Meeting – we need to come up with alternatives to how these positions are currently being handled.

* Nine people attended the Healing Circle which was held the last weekend in September and Facilitated by Margaret Borden. It was a very good experience for all who attended.

* The total of twenty one members and one friend attended the Town Hall Meetings.

* Three people are attending the SWUUC Fall Leadership Conference from the church, either paying for it themselves or with some scholarship reimbursements.

* To do lists are being accomplished by each board member but they continue to keep growing each month.

* Planning for the Congregational Meeting on November 8, 2009 took place. Membership packets were assembled on October 21 and were in the mail on October 22. Sixty-five packets were sent. Beth will be requested to stay and provide childcare. Sandwiches will be served in the back of the room during the meeting. Nominations were found for Committee on Ministry and Nominating Committee.

* Pulpit supply guidelines were discussed as well as ministerial leadership guidelines. The Worship Committee is charged to seek out speakers who fulfill the current needs of the congregation.

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 they are available. The next board meeting is November 10th, 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. Dead-

line for the agenda is November 6th. 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

October, 2009

Despite the odds, dire predictions and some nervous nail biting, the friends and members of RRUU continue consistently to support and honor the mission of the church mightily! As your treasurer I continue to be awed at the many who support the church fiscally according to their ability and how the income and expenses of the church seem to flow. Here is the abbreviated version of my latest treasurer’s report to the Board.

Members and friends continue to support the ministry of this fellowship in powerful ways! Following is a synopsis of my most recent treasurer’s report to the Board of Trustees. The full report is posted on the Board of Trustees bulletin board in the sanctuary.

September revenue was \$3,060.50 with expenses of \$1,666.64 resulting in a net profit of \$1,393.68. It bears noting our honoraria costs were down in September with only one paid out while there will be three paid guests in October. Also at the time of the report to the Board we had outstanding balances due on Our Fair Share giving and on employee FICA payments. Other giving in September included the collection of approximately \$175 worth of school supplies for needy students. **The “gifts in kind” total for September will be included in the October accounting report.**

With a tremendous amount of effort on the part of Board President Marla Loturco, a revised budget for FY2010 has been prepared for vote at the November 8, 2009 Fall Congregational Meeting. Each month more of our financial records are recorded in QuickBooks and we continue to work as a congregation to live within our means.

The October 11, 2009 Share the Plate second Sunday cash will be combined with the November 8 cash collection to go to FosterClub, the National Network for Young People in Foster Care, designated for use in the Texoma region.

For questions you may email me at 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



First I would like to thank all of the congregation, members and friends, who attended a Town Hall Meeting. The discussions were helpful and good changes were brought about by the participation. Membership Packets were mailed on October 21 with all of the updated proposed documents to all registered members. *Please bring these to the November 8 Congregational Meeting for final discussion and voting.* If you are unable to attend, please use the proxy included in your packet. A packet will also be available on request to interested friends – please see a board representative.

Worship Service attendance has picked up in October. I like to think it is a trend toward higher attendance but perhaps like me – others feel the October services have been particularly meaningful. My sense of spirituality and play were touched and reinforced by Steve Brooks. For me, laughter and holiness are deeply intertwined. Last year during the December Festival of Lights Celebration, Dawali was mentioned as one of the **world's light celebrations**. It was very interesting to me this month to finally find out what that includes. Maithri and Arthi were extremely generous in their time and talents to share their Hindu festival with us. And then came David Roth... He truly touched my soul. His songs speak to me of the strife and triumph in everyday life. Again and again the message is there – even one person taking a small stand can make a difference in the world. When we stand together - that difference may be multiplied. I am sorry for all of you who missed this service and the others. To round out **October, while it hasn't occurred yet as I write, I am looking forward to Megan's service tomorrow.** I want to personally thank the Worship Committee

for their hard work and both the variety and quality they are finding for our services.

As some of you are aware – we had some excitement on our website this month. Hackers got into our website, and sixteen others on Internet Texoma, leaving hate messages. Fortunately it was spotted quickly by one of our members and the website was taken down until it could be restored two days later. The same hackers attacked over 1000 websites worldwide that day. If you **haven't been on the website recently there are several new additions.** A calendar of events is now available on the Monthly Calendar button and July 2009 to current Newsletters on the Newsletters button.

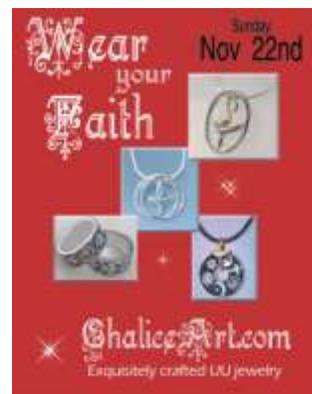
I appreciate the enthusiasm and participation people have shown this past month of October, I look forward to its continuance in November. See you at the Congregational Meeting on November 8 **to continue to create RRUU as 'our' church!**

Wear your faith ... Share your faith ... Give your faith ...

ChaliceArt creates dozens of unique silver and gold jewelry – and they make perfect gifts, On Sunday, November 22, **ChaliceArt** will have an assortment of items available to purchase, including several new, just created pieces.

November 22nd will be a special morning because our purchases will not only become wonderful gifts (for others or ourselves) but will also benefit the church because **ChaliceArt** has graciously volunteered to donate all sales to the church.

If you can't come on Sunday, you can visit **ChaliceArt.com** and shop on line. Be sure, however, to type "RRUU" in the "redeem gift certificate" box in order for the church to get credit for your purchase.



Please remember that you are part of the RRUU caring circle. It doesn't take a committee to care; it takes each of us. Spread your love; share your joy! Send an email to encourage someone who might need it today.



A Look Ahead...

January 31 Fifth Sunday Forum
To feature
UU-UNO Executive Director
Bruce Knotts

Yes, there is a Unitarian Universalist United Nations Organization and by virtue of our participation in the UU on a denominational level, we are all a part of that body! Not only that, the Executive Director of the UU-UNO will be in Texas in January and is our featured guest at RRUU on January 31st!

UU-UNO Executive Director Bruce Knotts will be offering Sunday morning leadership at only two congregations during his sojourn in the Dallas area... and Red River Unitarian Universalist is one of the two! In correspondence with our worship committee, he writes, "I am looking forward to visiting your congregation on January 31st. I hope my partner might be able to join me as he is from Dallas. We will put together an informative and exciting program for your congregation which will include a power point presentation and discussion."

More information on the UU-UNO will be included in our January newsletter. You are also invited to check their website at <http://uu-uno.org> to learn more about this important organization and its mission.



Share the Plate Sunday

Second Sundays = Second Mile

At RRUU, the second Sunday of each month is designated as a time for giving to others. We challenge ourselves to Share the Plate, reaching a bit deeper to add cash to the offering in addition to our pledges and regular giving. The cash from the offering is then given to a charitable program or organization serving local persons.



To date in FY 2010 the RRUU family has given to two worthy causes in the Texoma region. Our August 9 cash offerings of \$246.20 went to the Families Feeding Families program in Durant, OK for special needs in anticipation of the start of the school year. In September we gathered approximately \$175 worth of school supplies which went to TCOG for distribution. The late arriving supplies went to the Salvation Army for their "last minute needs" program which served families who were unable to anticipate a need in time to enroll in the regular back-to-school programs in the area.

Because there was not a designated recipient for the second Sunday in October, the cash offerings from that date will be combined with cash given November 8. These gifts will be given for children/youth in foster care. All cash and coin collected the second Sunday of November will go to FosterClub, the National Network for Young People in Foster Care! designated for use in the Texoma region. Check the website of this incredible organization led by, for and with those who are in or have grown up in foster care www.fosterclub.com and be sure to read some success stories!

Our December Share the Plate cash offerings will go to North Texas Youth Connection (formerly Juvenile Alternatives). Watch for more about this wide reaching program in the December newsletter. If you are a part of some local organization serving area children, youth or adults with particular needs, tell the Social Action Committee about the group for consideration as a Share the Plate recipient! Please submit information to socialaction@rruu.org as soon as possible for possible inclusion in the January to June designation of gifts.

Newsletter Naming

It has been suggested that we consider renaming this newsletter. Can we do better than "ramblings"? Please offer your suggestions to newsletter@rruu.org

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.



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 ALWAYS WELCOME.**



MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle, meets on moveable dates at moveable locations. Nothing is currently scheduled for Nov. Facilitators are Elbert & Marion Hill. **ANYONE WHO LOVES COOKING AND/OR EATING IS WELCOME!**



FREETHI NKERS, a Humanist Circle, meets the second Sunday of each month in Fellowship Hall at 12:45. Due to the Congregational Meeting Nov 8, the next meeting is TBA. Facilitator is Jim Gauthier. **ALL FREETHINKERS ARE 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!**



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 Nov 17 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. They are also exploring a recycling partnership program for RRUU. Facilitator is Amy Hoffman-Shehan. **ALL THOSE WHO LOVE THE EARTH ARE WELCOME!**



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



I T TAKES A VI LLAGE, a Circle of Parents Supporting Parents, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month in Fellowship Hall at 12:45. The October outing to continue kayaking on the Red River is being rescheduled. Plan to join the group for a trip to see the amphibian exhibit at the Nature and Science Museum in Dallas on Sat. Nov. 7th. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the Burger King parking lot (175 & Travis Street). Facilitator is Gerry Shehan. **ALL FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ARE 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 Nov 6. Bring your instruments and songs to share. Plans for the Nov 29 service and a weekend practice will also be discussed. Facilitator is Jan Fletcher. **ALL MUSIC MAKERS AND LISTENERS ARE WELCOME!**



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





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 ...a home for religious liberals in Southern Oklahoma and North Texas

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 E-mail: info@rruu.org

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.RRUU.ORG

Church Leadership

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