



Red River Ramblings

INSIDE:

- **Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award**
- **The Sunday Soapbox**
- **New Member Profiles**
- **Town Hall Meeting on Social Justice**

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Marla's Letter | 2 |
| Sunday Soapbox | 3 |
| Adult Forum | 3 |
| Bruce Cameron Service Award | 4 |
| After Church Lunch | |
| Bunch | 5 |
| 2 New Members | 5 |
| Board Bits | 6 |
| Treasurer's Report | 6 |
| Town Hall Meeting | 7 |
| Green Team invites | 7 |
| Calendar | 7 |
| Spring Camp Out | 8 |
| Spring District Mtg | 9 |

Sunday Mornings ~To Enrich our Lives

Sunday, Mar 4 ~

"Agnostic in the Season of Lent"

The Rev. Christina Tata, PhD

Moving into a new stage of faith can leave one with an attic full of cast-off, outworn beliefs, or a library of cherished volumes that were good and useful references for their time. In this Sunday's exploration, Rev. Tata reflects upon the Christian season of Lent as seen through the eyes of an agnostic, and wonders, as do many Unitarian Universalists, just what we should do about Jesus. Come prepared to laugh as well as to think.

Rev. Tata has served Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ congregations in California and Dallas, and is currently working as Director of Policy Administration for UT Southwestern Medical Center. She and her husband Chet live in Garland, for reasons they cannot fathom, since their wonderful offspring both live in Austin.

Sunday, March 11 ~

"Who Is My Neighbor?"

Mr. Larry Snyder

Some think of neighbor as the folk next door. What does it mean when you think of neighbor from a holistic view of the world we live in, not just one street, one town, one country?

Larry Snyder is a member of the congregation who, when not helping his wife Dr. Claudette Galen in her business, Texas State Optical, is a farmer on their twenty seven acre farm outside Sherman.

Sunday, March 18 ~

"No Obstacle to Love"

The Rev. Douglas Morgan Strong

Twice this month the name of a Universalist mystic has come up in my reading. It has nudged me to learn more of the life of George de Benneville who was - I think I can safely say - the only minister who died twice! He brought to America the radical concept that *"love must be based upon mutual respect for the differences in color, language and worship, even as we appreciate and accept with gratitude the differences that tend to unite the male and females of all species"*. Radical stuff in 1730! George de Benneville died on March 19th, 219 years ago tomorrow.

A sermon about the man, his life and why it speaks so clearly to us today.

Sunday, March 25 ~

"Exploring a Few Medical Myths"

Helen Schulze, MD

A look at how scientific evidence is ignored in favour of wishful thinking (or advertising in health issues.

Helen Schulze was born in Toronto, of German immigrant parents and trained in medicine at the University of Toronto. She has been practicing since 1988, and has been in a group family practice in Sherman since 1994. She is a wife, and mother of 2 teenage boys, and spends a lot of her office time talking about diet and exercise! She tries to practice what she preaches, in that arena. Helen is also a member of the congregation.

The Soul Café ~ 9:30
Adult Forum ~ 10

♦ Worship ~ 11:15
♦ Fellowship Gathering ~ 12:15



Manna from Marla

February was a wonderful month for me at RRUU, if for no other reason than being able to celebrate the thanks and appreciation I personally feel for Bruce and Carolyn Cameron for all of the changes they have accomplished in converting our run down building into a home along with thanking others in the church for their contributions to the remodeling and also for the day to day tasks they have taken on for us.

The Board wanted to find an appropriate way to show our collective appreciation to the Camerons and the decision was to establish an ongoing award.

Bruce learned of the Award at the dinner and the plaque which now hangs in the back of the chapel. The first recipient of the award was Carolyn Cameron in appreciation and recognition of all she has done during the renovations of our building.

As I listened people offer words of appreciation offered to individuals for things they've done I was overwhelmed realizing just how much must be accomplished day in and day out -

especially on Sunday mornings - in order for the church to function smoothly. To modify the phrase, it truly does *take a village* to have a church community! I think everyone went home feeling proud to be part of this amazing and remarkable village we are.

*"It truly does take a
village to have a
church community"*

Each month I have the joy of giving you a building update. The new railings now grace the entire renovated porch and the steps. The functional, but highly ugly railings around the chapel will soon be replaced with new matching railings giving our building a uniform look. The nursery, which will be located in what was the servant's quarters in the basement, is also underway. It needs someone who will come spend a few hours painting the room. If you can, please speak with me.

As you read in the e-news, our new chapel chairs have been ordered. They are top-of-the-line - wider than most chairs, with deeper cushions, higher lumbar supporting backs and even a rack for hymnals. Some will have arms. We're counting the days until they arrive, sometime in mid April.

Thanks to a serendipitous reading of a post on Craigslist and a caring conversation, Marilyn and Gil Alexander have secured a donated chair

lift for the church which soon will make the first floor accessible to those who have difficulty climbing stairs.

Elsewhere in this issue you will be introduced to a new program from the Good Times Team - the Sunday Morning Soap Box which they are offering food for thought in a novel way. Look too, for information about this month's After Church Lunch Bunch.

Our Sunday mornings continue to offer rich with thought-provoking sermons and forums and March Sundays will be just as exciting and rewarding.

See you in church, friends.

Marla

P.S. One last thing: we now have two outside groups using our building. If you know any organization that needs a meeting space, tell them about RRUU!

Take The Test ~

and find out where your religious views stand (click the picture below)



The Sunday Soapbox ~ Sometimes we just *need* to take a stand and speak up!!

“The Sunday Soapbox” becomes the newest program of The Soul Café on March 18.

The Soapbox will introduce spirited debate and conversation into the casual coffee and light eats conversations both before and after the Sunday morning service.

The Soapbox has two segments. In the first segment the speaker takes the stage at 11.05 for a period of exactly three-and-a-half minutes to state his or her point of view. The speaker has the soapbox and during the first segment people listen - here will be no questions or discussion.

The second segment takes place ten minutes after the service concludes. Speakers must agree to come back to

“We want to offer lively banter that will be riveting at the least!”

The Soul Cafe (the kitchen) for the second part of the Soapbox to answer questions and to engage in informal conversations.

The hope is to provide opportunities to broaden our own individual perspectives and offer lively banter that will be riveting at the least!

The Soapbox is a program of the Good Times Team, which operates the kitchen and provides food each week before and after the service. Those who would like to stand on The Soapbox should email the Good Times Team at GoodTimesTeam@rruu.org.



Adult Forum ~ The Open Mind Center, Sundays at 10 a.m.



The Adult Forum will focus on two separate topics during March - both promise to be intriguing! The month starts with Elbert Hill discussing the Winne-

bago Trickster Stories and their world view and will illustrate specific beliefs through telling a number of stories. Their stories teach us, mostly in a negative way, how we are to live, how to treat other beings and how to be part of our environment.



Then for the next six weeks the Forum will explore the world through the works of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was a 19th century

German philosopher, poet, composer and classical philologist whose critical texts on religion, morality, contemporary culture, philosophy and science will be the basis for a six-week adult forum. Nietzsche's aim was to show us that for society to be able to live up to its true potential we need a new system of values which is more suited to our needs.

- March 4 - The Winnebago Trickster Stories - Part I
- March 11 - The Winnebago Trickster Stories - Part II
- March 18 - Nietzsche: Faith: not wanting to know what is true.
- March 25 - Nietzsche: Is humankind one of God's blunders? Or is God one of human blunders?

The Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award ~

The highlight of the Thanks & Appreciation Dinner was the announcement of the **Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award**.

The plaque reads:

The Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award named in honor of an individual who has performed exceptional service on behalf of RRUU members and this facility. The award is established to honor individuals who through their continued efforts have made outstanding contributions to the welfare and progress of this church community.

The first recipient of the Award was Carolyn Cameron whose efforts, work and support of the renovation project was invaluable.

This is the first time in our 14 year history that such an Award has been created. It carries the deepest and most sincere appreciation of the congregation and will be awarded when a worthy nominee has been suggested.

The Award will be given by the Board of Trustees to an individual member who makes a significant impact on the life of our church.

The plaque hangs at the back of the chapel.



49 Mayfair Road
Pottsboro, TX 75076

Dear Friends,

The Camerons were overwhelmed by the Thanks and Appreciation dinner.

If someone had leaked the information, we could have been prepared to thank all of you right then, but even when Scott decided to visit on that very day, we were unsuspecting.

Good job keeping a secret!

We could fill the blank plates on the plaque right now with names of others of you who have helped get us off to a wonderful start. It's been a total team effort and we are honored to feel loved by all of you.

Bruce and Carolyn

The After Church Lunch Bunch ~ March 11th

The After Church Lunch Bunch - our highly informal, no agenda, all fun monthly social outing - will venture to the Sports City Café, 5067 South 9th Street in Calera (Durant). The restaurant is next door to the Choctaw casino.

Everyone is warmly invited to join in this Dutch-treat affair.

The restaurant is 16 miles north of the church - the easiest route is to take Hwy 69 (N. Austin Street) north, merge on 75 and you're there in 12 minutes.

ICE ~ In Case of Emergency

Put an emergency phone number (a friend or neighbor) in your cell phone contacts and name it "ICE".

Emergency personnel are trained to scan cell phone contact list and will call the number listed should you be found unconscious. It is a smart and easy way to make sure your family will be called.



Our Newest Members ~

Faye Shadrick and LD Clark joined the congregation on Sunday, February 26th.



Although born in Evansville, IN, **Faye Shadrick** was raised in the hills in Middle, TN. She has been a student of metaphysics since her teen years and it continues to

inspire and amaze her. She has four children - all born within five years of one another at which time she started life as a single mom. She has two kids living in Texas (Lewisville and Howe), one in Denver and one in Orlando. There are 8 grandkids and 6 great grandkids and she is very proud of her family.

By "luck" she was hired into the collection industry and for 40 plus years worked as a collector, trainer, owner plus any other position that was required during the time. Her work took her to Dallas, Orlando, Tampa, Philadelphia, San Antonio and she recently retired to Sherman.

She is delighted to be living alone (with her beloved cats), enjoying the retired life and excited to see what her next mission will be.

She found RRUU on line and after the first visit felt that she had found her church home. She thinks that the congregation is filled with loving folks and is an outstanding group.

Welcome Faye.



L.D. Clark has been involved with the church for a number of years, participating in a variety of activities, both as a member and a friend.

He has a passion for the banjo and guitar, writes songs, (a favorite is "When You Get To Heaven, Can I have Your Car?") and an accomplished musician. He is an active in environmental issues, founded the Freethinkers group, and is an enthusiastic progressive politically.

LD sells Aflac insurance and lives on a farm in Van Alstyne.

Welcome back L.D.

Deadline for the April Newsletter
is Saturday, March 24th
Send stuff (in plain text) to
newsletter@rruu.org

Board Bits ~from the Jan 17th Board Meeting

The board meeting was held on February 21, 2012. Kat Walston was absent.

In addition to normal board business the following topics were covered.

- First three sections of the Policies & Procedures Manual were reviewed.
- Brief report on the Commitment Campaign.
- "Planning for Social Justice" – with a town hall meeting
- Change board reps – Marie and Don exchanged months

- In March – all board members will be ready to review the next three sections of the Policies & Procedures Manual

The next board meeting is March 20, 2012, starting at 6:40 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 and reports to the board is March 13. Those wishing a few minutes during

the "open mic" will want to be ready to speak around 7:00 pm.

**Town Hall
Meeting
March 25th
Topic: Social
Justice and
Us!**

Financial Update ~the treasurer's report

" This month, water, trash pickup, gas and electricity totaled only \$226.23. The budget is \$360/month."

February was another good month in terms of the RRUU renovation. The iron railing looks beautiful! We also received a renovation donation of \$1,000.00 which brought our total cash renovation donations to \$22,200. Combined with our renovation loan of \$50,000, we have had a grand total of \$72,200 to spend on the renovation. We have spent \$63,501 as of the end of February and plan to continue railing work in front of the chapel. The estimated cost to RRUU for that renovation will be about

\$2,000.

Chairs for the chapel have been ordered, and Doug Strong added another \$66.00 to the fund for their purchase. Thank you! His pew- and chair-selling efforts have brought in \$3,316.00 which covers nearly the entire purchase of the new chairs. A donor will cover additional costs.

We contributed \$37.00 to Families Feeding Families, a food bank in Durant, OK. Thank you, Marion Hill, for researching the Durant food banks.

In terms of operating costs, we did better in February than we did last month. We brought in nearly enough to cover our monthly bills. Happily, utilities have been far less than we had thought they would be. This month, water, trash pickup, gas and electricity totaled only \$226.23. The budget is \$360/month. Currently, we have savings of \$31,326.29 (with \$8,700 of that earmarked for the ongoing renovation.) Our CD's stand at \$14,253 and checking totals \$230.00.

Marie Bellman
Treasurer

Town Hall Meeting ~ Becoming involved in the larger community

"The prophetic liberal church is the church in which all members share the common responsibility to foresee the consequences of human behavior (both individual and institutional), with the intention of making history in place of being merely pushed around by it".

~ James Luther Adams, "Taking Time Seriously," in
The Prophethood of All Believers.

How we "do" Social Justice Work is the theme of the upcoming Town Hall Meeting on Sunday, Mar 25th after things (at 12:30).

For some years our social justice practices have remained unchanged, using systems developed long ago. It is time for us to review what we're doing and what we could be doing to better reflect our own values and aspirations for our congregation's involvement beyond ourselves. After hearing the Rev. Tony Lorenzen speak and with suggestions from several members, the Board is hosting a Town Hall Meeting focusing on how we, as a people of faith, want to work with social justice issues. Everyone is welcome to attend this open forum and take part in the conversation. Sandwich makings will be available.

From the Green Team ~ two invitations



Belk Stores is offering us the opportunity of purchasing "Charity Sale Tickets". Your \$5. donation will support the Texoma Earth Day Festival and you can use the tickets for a 20-70% discount

at all Belk stores during their semi-annual Charity Sale event. The discount is value on April 21 only - from 6 - 10 am. The first 100 people to shop on that date will receive a FREE Belk gift card. Pre-sale purchasing is possible.

You can get tickets at church or by emailing the green team (greenteam@rruu.org).

The Green Team has also started a Spring Book Swap for those who are ready for some new or are tired of

HAPPENINGS THIS MONTH:

| | | | |
|------|--------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Fri | Mar 2 | 7 pm | UU Jam |
| Sun | Mar 4 | 9:30 10 11:15 12:15 | The Soul Café Adult Forum Worship "Agnostic in the Season of Lent" Fellowship Gathering in the Soul Café |
| Sun | Mar 11 | 9:30 10 11:15 12:15 12:30 | The Soul Café Adult Forum Worship "Who is My Neighbor?" Fellowship Gathering in the Soul Café After Church Lunch Bunch |
| Tues | Mar 13 | 7:30 9 pm | Green Team Board reports due |
| Sun | Mar 18 | 9:30 10 11:05 11:15 12:15 | The Soul Café Adult Forum Sunday Soapbox Worship " " Fellowship Gathering in the Soul Café |
| Tues | Mar 20 | 6:40 | Board of Trustees |
| Wed | Mar 21 | 7:30 | Texoma FreeThinkers & Ethical Society [outside group] |
| Sat | Mar 24 | 5:01 | April Newsletter Deadline |
| Sun | Mar 25 | 9:30 10 11:15 12:15 12:30 | The Soul Café Adult Forum Worship "So Great A Cloud of Witness" Fellowship Gathering in the Soul Café Town Hall Meeting on Social Justice |
| Tues | Mar 13 | 7:30 | Green Team |

looking at all the books in your home library that you really no longer want or need?

The Green Team has come to the rescue: The Wise and Wondrous RRUU Book Exchange! Bring any books you want to donate, browse through the many shelves of books already donated (located in the white bookcases on the second floor at church) and take what sparks interest for you.

As an experiment, this will be an ongoing project. If eventually we get too many books – they will be donated to a "friends of the library" sale.

Spring Camp Out ~ with other North TX UU congregations, Apr 13-15

An outdoor Adventure and campout for UU singles, couples, and families who share a love of fresh air, Chuck wagon breakfasts, and a relaxed time with congenial folks. Recently, the group has added stargazing parties, guided nature walks, and other activities that get us out of our Lazyboys and give us a break from carpal abuse. North Texas has a wealth of natural resources.



Here is an opportunity to participate in that "inter-connected web of existence of which we are a part." Community UU church

in Plano has organized an annual camp out for twenty plus years. Recently they have invited Horizon, Red River, Pathways, First Jefferson and Denton congregations to join and participate.

Where do we go?

The campout will be at [Eisenhower State Park](#) on the weekend of April 13-15. All 35 shelters are reserved for the campout.

What do I/we need to bring?

What to bring is different for each family. Click [here](#) for a mostly-comprehensive checklist of items.

How do I/we sign up to attend?

Click [here](#) for the reservation form.

Where do we sleep?

The park has surprisingly comfortable, weatherproof shelters. Shelters are screened in, measuring 12 x 16 and each has a light, electrical receptacle, picnic table, water spigot, grill, and fire pit. Some families prefer to sleep in a tent, which they can erect near their shelter. The shelter and campsite can be shared to reduce the cost.



What about meals?

Breakfasts are varied, delicious, and cooked to order by Dick Hildenbrand and crew on his very own Chuck wagon.

Saturday dinner is a "pitch-in" affair with participants fixing their favorite dishes to share with others. Dallas' five-star restaurants can't compete. Coffee, tea, and cocoa are available around the clock.



Are there activities?

Many and varied. We have families who want to explore. Some bring bikes, others boat or fish. It's fun to sit in a comfortable lawn chair, gaze at the watery vista, and read or nap. Not surprising, there are more than a few discussions,

although escape from CNN can also motivate people to join us. If you have a bright idea, put it on our message board and maybe others will be inspired. Or find a quiet spot and meditate. This isn't summer camp. No activity director will be shouting "time for the three-legged race! (although one could come together spontaneously)." It's your time, use it as you wish.

In the evenings?

Traditionally we congregate around the campfire in true Community UU fashion to chat, play instruments, sing songs, roast marshmallows...

Sunday?

We have an informal Sunday Service around 10 a.m. where we reflect and share some of our experiences at the campout.

Participants regularly report that they return to their busy lives refreshed, renewed, and refocused.



Jim Murphy at 903.421.2473, pa.pa.smurphy@suddenlink.net, is RRUU's campout coordinator. Let him know when you have registered. Still have questions? Give him a call.

Leadership

Board of Trustees

Marla Loturco, *president*
 Don Durland, *vice president*
 Marie Bellman, *Treasurer*
 Elbert Hill
 Richard Newlin
 Kat Walston

Committee on Ministry:

Carolyn Cameron
 Gerry Shehan
 Peter Schulze

Team Leaders:

Adult Forum:

Joyce Peak & Suzanne Durland
 Building/Grounds: *Laura Shehan*
 Communications: *Doug Strong*
 Finance/Endowment: *Marion Hill*
 Good Times: *George Gravley*
 Membership: *Marion Hill*
 Worship: *no single leader, duties are rotated among members*
 Ways & Means: *Don & Suzanne Durland*

RED RIVER

Unitarian Universalists

1515 Burnett Ave
 Denison, TX 75021

mail to:

PO BOX 1806
 DENISON, TX 75021-1806

How to reach us:

Email: info@rruu.org

Phone: 903.231.3232

Web: www.rruu.org

weekly E-News:

announcements@rruu.org



District Spring Conference ~ In Houston, Apr 27-29

Our Theme: One World – Many Voices

From space, our world seems small and fragile. The differences among us almost disappear in the vast emptiness of space around our big blue boat. And yet, we can find strength in our many voices to propel us into new places we would never reach with a single outlook. We can find leadership for a Multi-Cultural Age!

Keynote Speaker:

Juana Bordas
 Author of *Salsa, Soul and Spirit*,
Leadership for a Multicultural Age

Host congregation:

Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church
 1900 Bering
 Houston, Texas 77057
 713-782-8250
www.emersonhouston.org
www.swuuc.org for on-line registration



Chalice Circles ~ Everyone is invited!

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle meets on to work on the upcoming Texomaland Earth Day Festival (April 21st). March sees an increase of meetings since the Earth Day Festival is getting close. March 13th and 27th - both at 7:30 pm
 Contact [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](mailto:Amy.Hoffman-Shehan)

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle meets next April 6th for a dinner at the church. Facilitators are [Elbert & Marion Hill](#).