



Spring Journal

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork



Free minds, open hearts.

From the Minister Beloved Community

This season, we are asked to write about our volunteer work—the ways we serve our communities beyond our ministries with the congregation. This seems like a fitting discussion/exploration for Unitarian Universalists for whom service is so much a part of who we are as a faith. Our principles call us into relationship with each other and with the wider world. When we covenant with each other to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person as well as the interdependent web of all existence, we are covenanting with each other to create a world that values justice, equity, compassion, spiritual growth, and democratic process: world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. In other words, we are covenanting to help create beloved community.

Like many, my introduction to *The Beloved Community*, is through the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King described the beloved community as a kind of moral revolution to change people's hearts in order to create a more just world. At one point, he described the road to beloved community this way:

But the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the beloved community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opposers into friends. The type of love that I stress here is not *eros*, a sort of esthetic or romantic love; not *philia*, a sort of reciprocal love between personal friends; but it is *agape* which is understanding goodwill for all men. It is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. It is the love of God working in the lives of men. This is the love that may well be the salvation of our civilization.



This idea of beloved community infuses our identity as Unitarian Universalists—it's a bit of a chicken-and-egg situation. Unitarian Universalist congregations—and the people in them—are committed to harnessing the power of love to create justice in the world. People who are interested in creating loving justice in the world are drawn to Unitarian Universalist congregations because they recognize that ethos.

I can see this commitment to social justice—this commitment to making our communities better places—in the work that this congregation does. Certainly, I see it in the way you have made this space a warm and welcoming center—not only for renters but through the Songwriters Share Concert Series which contributes thousands of dollars every year to worthy East End charities. I see your commit-

ment to creating more justice in this community through your support of Maureen's Haven, which provides food and shelter to the homeless, and in the food collected here for the Food Pantry. I see your commitment to creating more love and understanding in this community through your support of Racial Justice East End, which provides opportunities for learning and discussion about race and racism. I see this commitment to creating more and deeper connections in the community in the new initiative to support a Children's Peace Chorus and in the annual *Iftar* dinner during Ramadan.

These past two years, there has been much lamenting about how divided Americans are. The divisions are real. They are not new. Fifty years

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Our President: Pamela Wittenberg

Like many, I fit the description of being a volunteer in a couple of ways. Primarily, I'm a person who "freely offers to undertake tasks" (Webster) associated with our congregation. Sometimes the tasks are awesomely important that no one in their right mind would hire me to do, but we come together as a group to get amazing things done. I also fit the description of being an employee who at times "works for an organization without getting paid," i.e. free labor, which seems to affect those who are in the caring professions.

Come Spring, I am a volunteer farmer at Full Circle Organic Farm, where several UUs also volunteer. There is something humbling about volunteering: It is not about *me* at all. It is no small coincidence that most of us are volunteers within and outside of our congregation. Working as a volunteer puts me in touch with something "out there" that is bigger than me. I willingly give what I can of myself in good faith and trust that everyone else is participating in good faith, too, so that we can all share the benefit equally. Nothing else comes as close to "community" as that.

Our minister continued from page 1.

ago, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. called for a moral revolution that could bring about the Beloved Community. Today, we have the opportunity to pick up that mantle. Today, we fulfill the promise of bringing forth the Beloved Community in our own communities and in the world.



Carol and David Holstein at the March For Our Lives demonstration in Sag Harbor.



Hilary Helfan with her sculpture at the Southampton Art center.

Nicaragua: A difficult country with resourceful people

Carol and David Holstein

In March we joined 13 other UUs for a College of Social Justice trip to Nicaragua. As you might recall, the UU College of Social Justice is a collaboration of the UUA and the UU Service Committee, providing experiential learning opportunities in social justice that inspire and help us to live our faith. It is a privilege to get to know UUs from across the country, bond with UUSC leadership and meet individuals making a difference in their communities.

Our children cannot believe that we go on a vacation where we need to study, plus do homework. The course work covers quite a range, but boils down to: 1) appreciating Nicaragua's history, including a long period of deplorable actions by the US and 2) increasing awareness of cultural differences from heritage as well as from economic circumstances. Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere with its 6 million people having a per capita GDP of only \$2,200. It has again moved toward totalitarianism from what started as a populist President. Yes, Daniel Ortega has been President since 2007 and his younger wife has become VP, ensuring that the family will remain in power.

Strikingly, Nicaragua is a beautiful country. It has volcanoes, huge lakes, oceans, beaches, rainforests, mountains and kind, friendly people. It also feels like a step back in time, with dinners costing \$10, \$1 beers and \$50 hotel rooms.

Our program focused on two areas: 1) Women's Rights and 2) Environmental Rights.

We spent considerable time with FEM (*Fundación Entre Mujeres*), Foundation Among Women, in northern, more rural Nicaragua. This group is supported by UUSC, reflecting a mission to help marginalized people as well as recognizing women's role in creating enduring groups, strengthening families and creating wealth. Nicaragua's machismo culture; men owning the land, an acceptance of violence against women and women's being relegated solely to chores and childbearing, produces a clear division where men hold the power. Basically, FEM exists to empower women. It's education about their rights. It is understanding that violence against women is not OK. Having children is a choice. It's the sharing of the household in-

come and wealth. FEM is servicing a group of women who are largely peasants (*campesinas*) with little formal education. FEM's reach has grown over time. It trains women in bio-intensive gardening, maximizing the productivity of small subsistence plots. It helps women to get their goods to market via a stall, to sell produce. It created a co-op to sell coffee, honey and hibiscus. Their fair-trade coffee is marketed by a Wisconsin company under the brand "Just Coffee." The women are extremely passionate about how FEM makes a difference in their lives. The most moving "speech" was from a woman who explained how she no longer *buys* onions from the market, but sells them. But the magical part was that by owning productive land, she gave her daughters a future which is better than hers, and provides hope.

Climate change is having a big impact. Rain falling in the dry season; erosion on both coasts; the possibility of a canal through Lake Nicaragua, all have catastrophic implications for traditional ways of life. Being environmentally sensitive is a "luxury" of wealthy countries. That said, we visited the *Guardianes de Yaoska* in Rancho Grande. This group of peasant farmers is fighting a Canadian mining company, B2 Gold. The Yaoska is a river which is the lifeblood of the community. Thus far, they have been successful in stopping the company from setting up an open pit gold mine. They are protecting their rural farming life against a government that encourages mining with little or no safeguards. But, their success has not come without sacrifice. They had to forego a year of school for their children as the company and government used schools to spread the pro-mining message. Violence against protestors was always a real threat. The most stirring speech was from a man who held up the produce he grows – Malanga – and stated that this is real gold, which you can eat.

It is inspiring when you realize that people with little education, little money and little power still can be successful and make a difference. Their commitment, dedication and drive to preserve their lifestyle for the *Guardians* or to improve women's place for FEM is truly amazing. It offers some hope as we look at our own situation in the US and the intractability of so many issues.

Margaret Logan 1936 – 2017

Margaret Logan was a long-time member of our Congregation. Born to American missionary parents in China, she grew up in Massapequa and attended Westhampton College at the University of Richmond, Virginia, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She went on to become a mother, a teacher of English and Writing at the college level, an author and a columnist. To borrow from the excellent obituary written by her sister, Elsa Townsend, and brother, John Logan, published in the *Southampton Press*: Margaret's first book, "Happy Endings" (1979), gained her much acclaim. Written in her signature prose, "Happy Endings" recounts the musings, adventures and conflicts of an epic bicycle trip Margaret took with her 17-year-old daughter, Tracy Ball, cycling from Paris to Rome. She subsequently wrote



five mystery novels. I particularly enjoyed her first one, "Deathampton Summer" (1988) and also "A Killing in Venture Capital" (1994). Margaret's sharp mind and keen wit are evident in everything she wrote and, when her son, Jim Ball, asked her recently what had brought her the most pleasure in life, her immediate response was "Writing."

Margaret and her husband, Charlie Coulter, had many passions. Happily for us, UUCSF was included among them. Margaret edited our Newsletter; Charlie offered excursions in "Old Faithful" (his 1929 Chrysler) at our auctions; they added family treasures to our yard sales; and they planted and tended our garden after the Meetinghouse was built. Along the way, they generously supported the effort to purchase the Bridgehampton property and then helped to design and build our Meetinghouse. One of my most memorable "Unitarian" experiences was the first Coming of Age Service held at the Meetinghouse. Margaret had helped five or six boys to clarify their thoughts in writing so that each could share his statement of beliefs. In true Unitarian form, each was unique. To me, helping 13-year-olds stand up with such confidence and honesty

was a triumph on Margaret's part, and yet another example of her kindness and ability to translate her passion into action.

Margaret and Charlie lived in Southampton Village where they made their passions known and presence felt in many ways. They were staunch environmentalists, bicycling everywhere and taking public transportation whenever possible - long before everyone started talking about global warming. They also joined a neighbors' group to protect the Village from overdevelopment. Charlie served on the Village Planning Board and the Southampton Association; Margaret wrote a bi-weekly opinion piece for the *Southampton Press*. According to a member of their cohort, Deborah Bates, they were constantly writing letters to the press, attending meetings at Village Hall

and often being called "obstreperous." They were passionate about historical preservation. Many remember the "Good Sense Party" - named by Margaret - which ran candidates to protect what they saw as the soul of their Village. Margaret and Charlie's house was "campaign central" for years. They worked tirelessly, with Margaret's strong analytical mind plotting out the campaigns. I believe that their Party had as many successes as failures and that it was effective in coordinating resistance to the commercial "powers that be" in Southampton Village.

Since Margaret died, I have heard the same words over and over: "*Modest...Smart, so very smart...Quick-witted, so much fun to be with...Utter integrity...Gracious...Loving...Cheerful ...*"

It is not often that new friends become *real* friends but, for my husband Tip and me, Margaret made it easy. We will continue to miss them both terribly.

Grania Brolin

Be Here Tao: My life with Qigong and Tai Chi

Growing up in a blue-collar neighborhood in Queens in a first-generation immigrant neighborhood - Italian and Irish - all the parents were invested in having their kids fit in, to become "American": American language; sports; movies; ideas; behavior. Meditation, self-examination and exploring consciousness were not even on the horizon.

Fortunately, my father's Native American background brought a different perspective into my life growing up, as he taught us Lakota dances and songs behind the high hedges he grew around our property. After he passed away in the 70s, I searched for these perspectives and found them in Asian studies. I read the *Tao te Ching* - a book of great wisdom, and studied Tai Chi - an inner spiritual practice of graceful moves. Tai Chi consists of a long "round" of ever-changing movements which support our inner energy and organ systems.

It was in Vermont that I first saw Tai Chi. A storm was coming up on the lake. A woman was doing these moves smoothly, sometimes balancing on one leg, as the dock moved up and down. I watched; enchanted. I had to learn this! Back in New York, overwhelmingly busy, I searched for a teacher and fortunately found the tradition of Professor Cheng Man Ching, working with his wonderful teacher, Patrick Watson, who created an international school.

After 40 Years of learning and teaching this wonderful art, I became ill, crippled from a genetic illness. I could no longer do the full Tai Chi form or engage in Push Hands, the nonviolent martial arts practice, based on getting out of the way. My saddest moment was losing the ability to do the Sword Form, which feels almost like galloping on horseback, or flying as you leap in the air, the sword flung outward as you turn and extend. Brokenhearted, I turned away from Tai Chi, but remembered the Qigong moves and postures which I saw Professor Cheng teach to sick patients.

Qigong is different from Tai Chi, in that each move has a specific healing energy. One might be for the heart's energy, one might be to strengthen bones. And they are all breathing meditations, which reduce stress and connect us with our inner spirit. It was amazing that I could do these postures and moves, healing and strengthening

slowly.

I fell in love again, this time putting together a system from these moves, based on the Chinese medical principles I had studied to become an acupuncturist. I started a class with Tina Curran and Steve "Tuna" Flores, my husband, here at the Meetinghouse, to share this gift. Seeing how effective this system was, we wanted it to be available to everyone. So Tina and Tuna both helped me to create a beautiful DVD, *'Roots & Branches 5 Element Qigong'*, which people all over the world can get from the internet.

The very first Qigong move is called "Embracing the Tao", embracing the everything; all that is. When I lost Tai Chi and embraced Qigong, I found a new gift to share, which we practice here at the Meetinghouse after the service, the second Sunday of each month. It's free, it's transformative, and everyone is welcome. So come, join us - *no experience necessary*.

Pat Gorman



Steven Skoldberg opens for Fred Raimond in the April 6 Song Writer's Share concert.

Finding My Roots

It is 8 pm, late August 1932. Deep in the Adirondacks, not far from Canada, the sun is setting, and my grandfather is trying to walk the three miles to his cabin on Mud Pond while he can still see the trail. His four children follow behind him, the youngest running every few paces, the oldest, his 15-year-old daughter Carol, angry that they left so late, trails out of sight behind them.

The hardwood forest in 1932 is predominately beech; their trunks, smooth as water-washed stone, tower 50 feet before the first branches spread to become a canopy hiding the setting sun. The largest of these trees carry symmetrical five-toed scars up as high as a child can see, and then farther into the canopy. Here the black bears have climbed to feed on beechnuts growing among the leaves.

The woods are quiet at this hour; with the sun low and cooler, the wind has calmed. The birds are finding places to roost, the squirrels slowing their competition for food. The loudest sound in the woods is the piping voice of the youngest child asking questions of his father, questions which are incomprehensible to the other children yet loud enough to carry over the footfalls of the little caravan.

While still out of sight of the cabin, a loud crash of breaking branches breaks their momentum. A quarter mile behind them, where Carol would be, they hear a crescendo loud and drawn out as if a falling tree, the whump of it striking the ground, and then the unmistakable "Woof" of a bear -- and Carol's screams. My grandfather drew the .35 revolver from his hip, turned, cocked it and ran back toward his daughter, pistol pointing in the air above his shoulder; the three little boys close behind him. They didn't want to miss the excitement. Nor did they want to be left alone in the dark.

The bear ran off seconds after hitting the ground, well before my grandfather reached Carol, and she was untouched.

My grandfather was something of a hippie drop-out a few decades before the flower children made it popular. He and my grandmother raised their children in Hamilton County, New York which is still roughly 1,800 square miles of forest with 1,500 families living there, plenty of space to get lost, and my father entertained his own children with stories of hunting, fishing, finding your way and surviving in the forest.

As a direct consequence, when Martha and I

left Brooklyn 30 years ago I did my best to arrange to move into a house in Connecticut that was within walking distance from the open woods. Here in Noyac we are 600 yards from a trail that runs 125 miles, mostly through second growth forest from Rocky Point to Montauk.

A big reason we retired here is that we discovered Southampton Town has roughly 300 miles of trails through woodlands and open land. For the Hamptonites who spend their time shuttling between the ocean, the restaurants and their own manicured lawns and pools, this will probably come as a surprise.

The woodland which we see in the hills north of Route 27 was never valued as agricultural land, and as the country began to use coal and oil for heat, that land was left to re-forest on its own, criss-crossed with the 300-year-old cart roads that farmers had used before the railroad. Thankfully, as the land became more valuable, a few conservationists organized to protect these open spaces for public use.

We joined one group, the Southampton Trails Preservation Society, which has over 200 members and an active 12-member board. They are keeping the old woods roads and many new trails well blazed and clear of fallen trees, so anyone can get out in the woods. I join their maintenance crew every Thursday morning to walk the trails with chain saws, weed whackers and mowers. Just this year, I even agreed to work as president of the group. Although I'm sure my grandfather would feel this is far too organized for his taste, I do feel that I have somehow returned to my roots, which at age 74 is very satisfying.

Mark Potter

Writers— Plans for Our Upcoming Journal

Our next Journal will be published in August. In this upcoming issue we are looking for articles about summer experiences in the Hamptons. Please send your material by August 15, 2018. Try to limit your articles to 600 words and include pictures if available.

We strive for peace in our hearts and in the world around us.



Our congregation hard at work on Paul Berman Day.



From left: Mark Potter, Martha Potter, Carol Holstein, David Holstein, Anita Baskin. Our hosts for the congregation's Seder April 7.

The Homestead, Think Globally, Act Locally, Love Your Neighbor

Your daughter can't afford to live here on her new teachers' salary.

Your new friend can't attend your birthday celebration because she lives 45 miles away and doesn't "come east" on the weekends.

Your morning employees are always late because of the trade-parade traffic.

Your Dad can't navigate the stairs in the family home anymore and is sleeping on the couch in the den, next to the powder room with no shower.

To understand why we have such a shortage of Affordable Housing, Workforce Housing and Mature Adult (Senior) Housing on the East End of Long Island, we have to understand the phenomenon of NIMBYism.

NIMBY, which stands for *Not In My Back Yard*, describes a person or an attitude. A NIMBY might agree that a community needs affordable housing, but doesn't want it placed too close to his or her own home or in their neighborhood. They're concerned that it might impact their property values, create too much traffic or they might have to deal with people who are racially or ethnically "undesirable."

From The Kemp Commission: Sound Advice For Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing, written by Jack Kemp for President George Bush:

"In Bridgehampton, Long Island, a 102-acre residential construction project that included low-cost dwellings was halted when New York State environmental officials happened to sight in a pond on the property a tiger salamander, a species classified as "endangered." The project was halted over a year until the developer agreed not to build within 100 feet of the pond. To compensate for delay and compliance costs, the developer reduced the number of affordable units within the project by almost one-half. The result: less housing that working Americans could afford."

Today, there are about 30 new homes priced from \$2.5 to \$4 million dollars on that site. I guess the salamanders got paid off! But one lifelong Bridgehampton resident, who happens to be African American, wasn't paid off, and now lives in Northampton. She has an excruciating drive to and from her job in Southampton every day.

The NIMBYs have intimidated the politicians and bullied developers into creating a world with high hedges and motorized gates in the Hamptons.

Our community is aging, with fewer young people here to work the jobs we once held. And now that we've scared the *bejeezus* out of the Latino community with all the Immigration and Custom Enforcement threats, there are fewer employees to work the jobs that our entitled kids aren't interested in.

We need local, affordable year-round and summer options to house teachers, business owners, interns at local hospitals, and even town and village employees. Expecting workers to commute an hour or more each way to mow your lawn, make your macchiato, teach your children or file your permits is becoming less realistic every day.

It requires those of us who can stand up at town halls and village halls to demand that our politicians do the right thing to create thriving communities with diversity in ages, cultures and backgrounds. We need YIMBYs!

YIMBY is an acronym for *Yes In My Back Yard*, a pro-development movement taking shape nationally in the US, in contrast to the NIMBY phenomenon. The first-ever YIMBY conference was held in Boulder, Colorado in June 2016. Typically, the YIMBY movement supports responsible development of new housing in towns where rental costs have escalated to unaffordable levels. YIMBYs may also support public-interest projects such as wind turbines.

I'm a YIMBY advocating for every village and hamlet in the five East End townships to have at least one affordable housing community, for having allowable accessory apartments for workforce housing and for building senior housing that allows our elders to live comfortably where they have established lifelong family and friends. I'm a YIMBY for anti-discrimination and protection of immigrant rights. I am a YIMBY for fair and equitable treatment for the people of the Shinnecock Nation in my own backyard.

What can you be a YIMBY for? I encourage you to attend village and town meetings and find out what community groups and organizations meet nearby and show up. First, seek to understand; then seek to be understood. JOIN ME. STAND UP and BE A YIMBY!

Michael Daly
(Excerpted from the East End Beacon, June 2017)

New Member Profile... Steven Romm

It is never an easy task to look back on your life and really examine one's accomplishments and failures in a dispassionate way. It is much easier to put on rose-colored glasses and pretend that everything since birth has just gone incredibly well. Today that would be known as "fake news". I will therefore in as brief a way as possible, describe the events that have brought me to my present state of mind as well as my lifestyle.

I was born in New York City and have a brief memory of my parents' apartment. It was on Madison Avenue, so I was told. Shortly after that my parents moved to Glen Cove. At this point it is important to note that none of my extended family ever spoke with each other. Everything was a secret and I never did learn about my grandfather, grandmother, (both sides) father and mother, or my uncle.

When my parents left New York they moved into a 36-room mansion in Glen Cove. Shortly after living in the "large" house they moved to a normal home, also in Glen Cove. From Glen Cove they moved to Norgate in Roslyn, then Old Brookville and finally Glen Head. My schools included Glen Cove, Friends Academy, Roslyn, and finally North Shore (Glen Head).

Beginning at the age of six, I began sculpting lessons. I had a natural talent for working with clay, and at the age of eleven I had a major exhibition at the Associated American Artists in New York. This was covered by all the major papers as well as publications overseas. I had become a child prodigy which had a major effect on a good part of my life. A sense of superiority took hold and did not end until many years after college.

Regarding college: I was accepted to Bard in the 9th grade; Yale, and Boston University in the

second week of my senior year in high school. I chose BU, and was very fortunate to get a great education that is valuable to this day.

Also during the time that I was in high school, I attended Adelphi College, and went to New York to study sculpting with Chaim Gross, a world famous sculptor, at the New School for Social Research. I also went to Skowhegan Art School in Maine, the youngest student to ever attend this summer program.

After college I taught art for 17 years, but left teaching to open a photography studio with my now-deceased wife, and ended up as an artist's agent specializing in public relations. With much success came the opportunity to open our poster art publishing business which also became very successful. We moved to the Hamptons in '92 and ten years later my wife passed away.

People say that lightening can't strike twice, but it did for me. Through a series of circumstances, Lenore Bailey became involved in my life and it became clear to both of us that this was meant to happen. Lenore and I are now married and work together in the art field.



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When fear strikes, we stand on the side of love.

Maintaining East Hampton Trails

My wife Carol leads a group of outdoors people who gather once a week on Tuesday mornings to maintain hiking trails for the East Hampton Trails Preservation Society. I usually go along as a worker bee. The group clears away branches of bushes and trees that are continually trying to take up sunlight space that the trail represents. Sometimes we repair bridges and walkways. Occasionally the group has worked to develop a new trail, such as the Amsterdam Beach trail in Montauk. Women are a majority in the group, which no doubt is due to Carol's influence.

Climate Change Activism

UUCSF is heavily involved in the Citizens' Climate Lobby, a national organization that is promoting a bipartisan solution to climate change known as Carbon Fee and Dividend. Mary Morgan, Tip Brolin and I make up 3/4 of the small group that leads the local chapter. This involves letter writing to public officials, meeting with public officials, having a table at local events to recruit new members, and going to Washington, DC to participate in lobbying efforts. Many UUCSF members and friends have signed on with their support and have written letters. If you haven't already joined, please speak to one of us.

John Andrews



A new banner to catch the eye and mind.



Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of the South Fork

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