Highlights

February 8th
Edgar’s Place Proudly Presents Chris Farrell and Larry Rand

Saturday - February 15th
Valentine’s Party! 2-6pm
We will be kicking off the Capital Campaign with a Valentine celebration! Be sure to join us for live music (our own Chris Ussery and his band!), dancing, hors d’oeuvres, desserts, and a ticket auction! Help to pass the word to all friends of UUCC that we want everyone to attend. A bit of a reunion is possible!
Please sign-up to attend in the Gathering Room, or RSVP with the office so we can have a headcount for food planning. A $20 donation is requested to cover expenses. Childcare provided upon request.

Forum
Follows the Sunday Service  (11:30am)
February 2nd:  No Forum - Potluck Sunday
February 9th: UU Gabfest with Dan Feldt
A conversation about issues important to UUs, drawn from the UU World magazine. Contact Dan in advance for links to articles to be discussed.
February 16th: Waking Up Discussion – Rev. Larry McClellan
Dr. Larry McClellan will speak about the Underground Railroad. Larry, an engaging storyteller, has written two books on the subject. He’ll tell about the enslaved people who took this dangerous journey to freedom and those who helped them. NOTE: For this session only, we will meet at 12:30.
February 23rd: Available

Sunday Worship Service at 10:00am
70 Sycamore Drive, Park Forest
708-481-5339

February 2nd
“Unique Authentic Communities: Something Real”
By Michael Jennings
Motivation speaker Michael “MVP” Jennings will focus on the UU principles...  
1). Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, and
2). A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

February 9th
“Taoism and Tai Chi: Living the Watercourse Way”
By Reverend Denise Tracy
In this service we will explore the prayer form of Taoism (Tai Chi) and learn more about this ancient religion and its practices.

February 16th
“Real Men Love Strong Women”
By February Sky
Women have suffered institutionalized inequality for centuries. This has touched their personal lives as well, since men who saw women as property felt justified in abusing and controlling them. However, there have always been men who recognize the inherent worth and dignity of women. This service will be a tribute to the growing numbers of these men, with special recognition for those who have stood beside women in the annual Women’s Marches beginning in January of 2017.

February 23rd
“Building a Ministry of Commitment”
By Wally Verdooren
We all have a theology and philosophy of money. Let’s explore how money matters at UUCC can be affirming, inclusive, and joyful rather than uncomfortable, divisive, and guilt-inducing (as is too often the case in religious organizations of every variety).
In my newsletter column today, I would like to talk about some suggestions that have been made about how we get the work of the church done. These suggestions state that the paid staff are doing a lot of the everyday work of the church, and that it might cut down on our church budget if we had more volunteers doing the work.

Before I discuss the possibility of using volunteers, let me say that none of you would be back at the church if it weren’t for the work of the paid staff. In particular, Virginia Jackson and Nancy Irons did the lion’s share of work helping us overcome our crisis caused by the two floods, the worst of which happened on Valentine’s Day in 2018. One thing that has disappointed me is that there hasn’t more of an outpouring of gratitude towards them for the work that they did saving the church. What they have been faced with instead are people in the church who are clamoring to have them replaced by volunteers. Such a message would be more easily received if it were accompanied by a message saying that the work that the paid staff have done up to this point has been appreciated by members of the church. This causes me to have to shore up the morale among the paid staff who see themselves performing thankless tasks. Well, I do thank them and hope that others in the church will too.

Well, here are my thoughts on using volunteers. I am for expanding the use of volunteers but would like the issue to be reframed so that people in the church understand the larger context in which the discussion should take place.

1. Get out of the volunteers vs. paid staff mentality

Rather than framing the issue as one of replacing paid staff by volunteers, I encourage people to look at ways that these two ways of getting work done can be made to fit together. In other words, why don’t we look at the activities done by paid staff and choose those which are most easily done by volunteers. The Board of Trustees has asked such a review to be done by the time of the February Board meeting.

Then if the volunteers start doing those easier tasks, that will free up the paid staff to do activities that add more value to the church. Ever since Virginia Jackson has been here, she has been advocating for more fundraising activities. If she were freed up from some of the more mundane tasks that she has to do on a regular basis, then she could add more value to the church by drumming up more business in terms of rentals of the church property by people in the community. That’s just one example, I’m sure there are more.

2. Focus not just on decreasing costs, but on raising revenue

For those who see using volunteers as a way to cut the church’s cost as a way of helping the church balance the budget, I encourage you to look at the other side of the equation, namely, expanding our membership which would in turn grow our revenue side of the balance sheet to be closer in line with our costs of running the church. To that end, I have asked the newer members of the church to come up with ideas on expanding the membership, and I will be facilitating a brainstorming meeting in March to see what they come up with. These ideas will be taken to the Board and discussed, and subsequently presented to the congregation.

3. Understand constraints

In any organization, there are certain constraints such as cost, time and quality. These are not independent. You can pay a plumber a lot of money to fix your sink, or you can go to Menard’s, purchase the parts and try to do the job yourself. If you try to lower the cost of doing the job, then, you will increase the time it takes to do it and you will lower the quality of the job because it is being done by someone who is an amateur versus a professional (who is usually licensed and bonded so that you have a literal guarantee of the quality of their work).
In a similar way, if you ask a volunteer, that may lower the cost to the church by having it done by someone who is doing the work for free, rather than paying a staff member to do it. But you are increasing the time it will take to do the task, not only because the staff member has to take time out of their regular work to train the person, but because the person will naturally take more time doing it than someone who does it all the time. There is also the quality issue, because a person who is doing the work as a volunteer, especially on work that deals with the church’s physical or computer files, is more likely to make mistakes.

And from the Board’s standpoint, there is another advantage of having paid staff. That is consistency.

Diane O’Connor applied for the office administrator position at two separate times. Originally when she came to the office years ago, she saw that the filing system of the church was very disorganized precisely because it had been worked on by a group of volunteers. She ended up not taking the position at that time. Years later, after at least one previously hired office administrator filling the position and a sizable portion becoming more organized, she applied for and accepted the position. However, a considerable amount of tasks still needed organization aside from her main responsibilities which were in large part previously done by volunteers. She was given a volunteer assistant and the arrangement was for the assistant to be there every Friday. It seemed to go well for the first couple of weeks. The volunteer seemed dedicated and helpful, but suddenly stopped showing up without any communication or responses to Diane’s attempts to contact her which put Diane in a stressful position. A consistent volunteer replacement was not found. Years later, assistants were interviewed and hired which worked well and organization continued to improve. Virginia and Nancy have still continued that effort to reorganize the office which is ongoing.

When I was looking for a church, my cousins who were UUs down in St. Louis said that my problem was that I came from an organized religion (i.e., the Catholics). Why don’t you try an unorganized religion instead, like the UUs? They were saying it tongue in check, of course, because to them “unorganized” meant not top-heavy, but involving more of the congregation. And I have tried to stay true to that principle, but I draw the line at being a “disorganized” religion. So how do we have volunteers without having the negative side effects regarding time, quality, and consistency?

We should have an organized volunteer program. The Board is going to ask neighboring UU churches if they have a volunteer program in place and see if they can offer us some advice on how to run one if we choose to do so. And for those in the church suggesting we use volunteers to help out in the church? My humble suggestion is that they be tasked with organizing and staffing the volunteer program. If they are unwilling to do so because they don’t have the time, then I will entertain at the next Board meeting in February the introduction of the names of those people who are willing to create and head a volunteers committee, who will analyze the work being done by the paid staff, and see which tasks can be done more readily by volunteers, take the volunteer program of other neighboring churches if they have and adapt that program to the needs of our church.

In my opinion, any volunteer program should be able to ask for volunteers, have them trained in conjunction with the paid staff they will work with, and have regular monitoring take place, both so that the volunteers are happy with what they are doing, and so that the paid staff will have some input on whether that volunteer is suited to the work they are doing. But again, that’s just my suggestion—the starting place should be what has already been established at other churches like ours.

So, how about it? Any volunteers for helping put together the volunteer program?
Dr. Gloria Latimore Peace is the Host and Producer of The H3O Television program which airs in the Chicago Metropolitan area on Chicago Access Network Television (CAN-TV ) Channel 19.

The H3O Show is telecast every Friday from 8:30PM-9:30PM. It repeats on Sundays from 3:30PM-4:30PM. Our program offers interviews with outstanding leaders in the areas of History, Culture, Health, Nutrition and Spirituality.

The February 2020 Schedule follows:

**February 2nd** - "Arrested Development: Know Thy Addiction II" featuring Wayne Sebamurti Gentry and Pastor William Johnson.

**February 7th and 9th** - “History According to Black” featuring Prof. Timuel Black

**February 14th and February 16th** - "Consciousness and Spirituality” featuring Hunter Adams III

**February 21st and February 23rd** - “A Gathering of Griots: From Human Rights to Civil Rights, Part 1” featuring Dr. Evonne Glakey, ANCESTOR Kwesi Ronald Harris, Dr. Asantewaa Wadie, Dr. Josef Ben Levi

**February 28th and March 1st** - “A Gathering of Griots: From Human Rights to Civil Rights” featuring Kwabena Jack Childs, J.D, Dr. Maisha Bennet, Angela C. Davis and Janelle LaVigne.

Go to www.youtube.com to view previous H3O TV programs and search Gloria Peace on tool bar.
UUCC is Hosting a UUA Webinar class!
“Whose History is it Anyways?”

UU History - a new and needed perspective! An opportunity for us all to learn and grow together; as a congregation and religion, for our future, through our past!

All are invited and encouraged to attend

How does what history we know and teach about our religion affect who can see themselves and feel welcome in our congregations? What is the history we don't know yet?

Reverend Connie Simon will be presenting new important research and perspective through this Webinar class titled “Whose History Is It Anyways?” How much do you know about the roots of our faith tradition? Explore the history of Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalist in this five week class. Using an anti-colonialist, multicultural lens, we’ll look beyond the traditional, dusty facts of history and examine to see how our faith was born and how it has developed and evolved over the years.

Class sessions will be in our church from 6:30-9pm on Mondays January 27, February 3, February 10, February 17 and February 24. An additional final congregational discussion opportunity on what we have learned will be held Monday, March 2nd at 6:30pm.

New members and old are both hoping you will consider attending and growing with us.

Please sign up to attend on the sign up sheet clipboard in the gathering room. If you have any questions, or are interested but see obvious obstacles to your being able to participate, please contact Julie Hundley, event facilitator at JuliaHundley1980@gmail.com

Julie Hundley is a UUCCPF 2019 new member who would have joined years ago if when she visited the service had either not been about teaching UU history in the way she has consistently seen it understood and offered to her and others here. That history, while certainly one important part, showed her that this was not a place for her to grow, explore or feel at home. She recognizes now that UUs and our congregation are committed to principles that include supporting each other's constant search for greater truth and believes that this class could be a part of new beginnings and deepening all our understandings of each other, ourselves, the nature of truth, and the future as well as the past of our beloved religion and congregational community. This class is one beginning Julie sees for UUCCPF as we seek, as a community, to deepen our understanding of how we make our principles actionable with each other; how we demonstrate love, respect, support and justice for all life; and how we create greater welcome in our home for more new members to come, join, stay and grow with us.

Religious and Character Education by Dan Feldt

It's with some sadness that I am announcing my stepping down from the Director of Religious Education position. Even so, I'm very much encouraged by the new direction that the program is embarking on. There are many energetic and dynamic people who are stepping up to take RCE into an exciting future. I'll be taking on a consulting role for the near future until the new team is well established. My deepest regret is that I won't be spending as much time with our amazing and delightful children.

In faith, Dan (Here are some pictures of my memorable times with them).
About People and Happenings in our Community

- These images are from a recent Sunday service led by Jodi Libretti. **Left:** Colin Kirchner gives Mike Fisher (Jodi’s boyfriend) a friendship bracelet. **Right:** Joyce Semmler gives an elevator speech on why "I Love This Church" as part of the lead up to the capital campaign for a new roof.

- A Webinar Series in the Sanctuary is being held at 6:45PM on Mondays, Feb. 3, 10, 17 and 24th. Andy Stevens connected Wi-Fi. The Webinar explores the history of Unitarian Universalism. Rob vandeLogt offered to cover the fee. New member, Julie Hundley, is facilitating. Flyers are in the Gathering Room.

- Our Valentine Party is going to be held on Saturday, Feb 15th from 2 to 6PM featuring music by Chris Ussery and his band mates, dancing, and Hors d'oeuvres by Pat Segner. Nancy Irons has been facilitating this Capital Campaign kick-off for weeks. She has been cutting out hearts and making love baskets for gift drawings.

- St Irenaeus, 78 Cherry St. Park Forest, is hosting a Mardi Gras celebration on Sunday, February 23rd from 1 to 4PM. A buffet lunch is at 1:00. Quentin Flag will entertain at 2pm with music, singing and dancing. My Red Hat sisters love him. Fee is $25 and $10 for children. There is a Children's Fun Room with prizes awarded for best Mardi Gras costume, trivia contest and a Talent Show. This is a BYOB event. I'm in. For more information, call Diane at 708-363-4082.

- Register to Vote by February 18th. Andy is making T-shirts with the Vote logo on them. The Crete Library has deputy voter registration people in house to facilitate the process. Call 708-672-8017 for more information.

- Save Saturday, June 20th for an Indiana Dunes camp-out. I reserved Nisaki Group Camp #2 overnight till Sunday the 21st of June. About a 2-block walk from the beach, it features tents, pit toilets, picnic tables and a fire ring. Cost is $12 per car. Bring your own food and equipment. Or just come for the day, drive to the beach and come to the campsite for a Summer Solstice campfire and s'mores.

- The Midwest Regional Assembly is at the Rockford UU Church on Saturday, April 18th. Registration is $100.

- The same church makes and sells Unitarian jewelry and T-shirts. Chief Bob Jensen has an idea of our church making UU jewelry and selling it. Chief has a necklace from the UU Church of Rockford IL and sometimes wears a T-shirt with the design of six interlocking circles (for six major Religions) indicating that they all share in a quest for meaning. How about some of our gifted artists (Sheri, Javier, John, Joyce, Andy, Diane ...) design jewelry and T-shirts and we sell them? There is a flyer from Chief on the bulletin board. We could use the money for our Capital Campaign. Rev. Denise talked about one UU church increasing membership by selling their products. Talk to Robert “Chief” Jensen about this if you are interested.

- Our church is looking for volunteers to be part of the Building and Grounds team. We need plumbing and electrical help. I'll take the names as liaison to the Board along with Jeff Fields.

- Monica Regan and I were talking about starting a Mission and Vision Committee. Anyone interested?
Listening Hearts

Two Listening Hearts, or members of the Lay Pastoral Care team, are on hand each month to serve your needs. They are not acting as professional counselors, but rather a source for listening, support and resources. The Listening Hearts volunteers for the month of February will be Beverly Feldt and Darlene Obejda.

Financial Update – Audit, Arbitration & Capital Campaign

The long-anticipated Audit Committee has been appointed; consisting of Elaine Miller, Irene van der Hoek, and Jeff Fields. They will be reviewing the finances for the 2018-2019 fiscal year and will prepare a report of their findings for the Board of Trustees by mid-April. They will also present their findings at the Annual Meeting in May. Please thank them for their service.

Last November we submitted 98 pages of evidence to the Arbitrator for the case against our flood contractor. The contractor has refused to participate and did not submit evidence or respond to our evidence. The Arbitrator reviewed the materials and has awarded us a settlement of $9,565.58 out of the $10,015.59 that we requested. Yeah!!

Unfortunately, with the contractor still ignoring this process, we will probably have to take this to small claims court to recover any actual money. Fortunately, we are likely to win in small claims court, since we have followed the arbitration requirement in our contract. We shall see. . . just don’t hold your breath, it may take a while.

Do you love our church building nestled in the woods? The February 15th Valentine Party marks the 2-year anniversary of our terrible flood. We survived the flood that came from below, but now we need to prevent a flood from above. If you love our building, please contribute to the Capital Campaign to raise funds to replace the roof and repair the ceiling.

Our goal is to raise at least $50,000. We intend to reach out not only to our immediate members and friends, but also to past members and alumni. A new Donation page will be established on our website with a PayPal button allowing you to make donations via credit/debit cards. Please ponder what contribution you can make towards this effort. We appreciate your generosity!

—by Nancy Irons
General Assembly
2020 - Register Now

General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where we conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles. Please join us **Wednesday, June 24 through Sunday, June 28, 2020** in Providence, Rhode Island for this 5-day immersive experience where we participate in inspirational worship services and informative workshops, reconvene with friends and colleagues, and explore our bustling exhibit hall. The theme for General Assembly in June 2020 is Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!

### Registration and Housing

Full-time registration is $400 for adults, $240 for high school youth and retired and candidate ministers, $150 for off-site registrants. Register by March 15 for the lowest rate. Rates will increase on March 16 and again on May 1. See website for options for paying in installments. Go to [uua.org/ga](http://uua.org/ga).

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**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**

Do you love our building nestled in the woods? We survived the flood from below. . . . Please help prevent a flood from above!

If you love love, can you share the love? There will be a gift basket raffle at the Valentine Party where people can win baskets of love!

We are calling on you to share the love. Please put together a gift basket of goodies you love or that someone else is bound to love.

There is a donation drop-off box in the coatroom. We want nice quality items, particularly themed baskets for our raffle fundraiser. Please share the love! And remember to bring your checkbook to the party! Please share the love!

We aim to raise $50,000 in the Capital Campaign to replace the roof. This will include outreach to UUCC friends and alumni. . . . Can you contribute towards this goal? Please share the love and help fill our heart!
Electric school buses. The reason it is going forward is that a utility is backing it up. Virginia will have the largest electric school bus program in the United States. The plan is to have 1050 buses by 2025. Another interesting point is that all the school buses will be vehicle to grid technology. What this means is that the bus will not only bring in electricity storing charge in the batteries, those same batteries will be able to send electricity back out the grid to help the utility out.

**Largest Electric School Bus Program In United States Launching In Virginia**

For full article and more information, click [HERE](#).

Dominion Energy has partnered with local Virginia school districts to begin replacing diesel buses with 100% electric school buses in phases. No phase can come too soon, so CleanTechnica wishes all school districts a rapid rollout after the initial 50 launch the program. Children are more sensitive to air pollution than adults, and it hurts them and their studies.

Thomas Built Buses Inc (TBB) has been selected as the provider of all 50 of the initial electric school buses. These buses are supposed to go into operation this year. This will already be the largest deployment of electric school buses in the United States. After 2020, Dominion Energy will add 200 electric school buses per year for the next 5 years, with the goal being to reach a 50% electric bus fleet — 1,000 electric school buses — by 2025. The aim is to reach 100% electric school buses by 2030.

- Reduce operation & maintenance
- Reduce costs for schools by 60% - Lower cost + Less maintenance
- Equivalent of 17 MPG compared to 6 MPG for diesel
- Charging stations & infrastructure provided at no cost to school
- One bus reduces CO2 emissions by 54,000 pounds each year
- 50 buses reduces emissions by 2.7 million pounds
- Replacing 1,050 buses over 5 years with new electric ones will reduce emissions by 810 million pounds, the equivalent to taking 78,000 cars off the road!
- Buses are a different creature compared to what I have driven in electric driving. To give you an idea of the different sizes of battery banks.
  - Mitsubishi Imiev: My first electric car was 16 kw-hr, about 64 miles run flat
  - Tesla Model S: My present car is 70 kw-hr, about 230 miles run flat
  - Tesla Model S: 100 kw-hr, run flat is about 373 miles
  - Rivian pick up truck: largest is 140 kw-hr, about 410 miles run flat
  - Virginia school bus: 220 kw-hr, about 134 miles run flat

An easy conclusion to come to is that this is all easily possible. It’s a plan and a commitment. I have responded to many an article saying that this is all absurd and can’t be done. Save money, better for all our health, and wonderful quietness while it drives. Plus it is a rolling power provider. One of the reasons to change and spend a little more, is that it is superior to the product we have now. What do you think?

Green Sanctuary Team
Rainbow Cafe is a social event that provides a safe and welcoming environment for single or partnered gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender adults and their allies, by creating a space where they are able to socialize outside of the usual bars. Every 3rd Friday of the month. 
**Doors open approximately 6:30pm. Movie 7pm.**

February 21st movie: **“Were the World Mine”**

If you had a love potion, who would you make fall madly in love with you? Timothy, prone to escaping his dismal high school reality through dazzling musical daydreams, gets to answer the question in a very real way. After his eccentric teacher casts him as Puck, in Midsummer Night’s Dream, he stumbles upon a recipe hidden in the script to create the plays magical purple love-pansy ensnaring family, friends, and enemies in this comic chaos. Timothy forces them to walk a mile in his musical shoes. See trailer by clicking [HERE](#).

**A Moment in Balance**

Yoga Classes by Karen Nielsen
- **Monday and Thurs**
  - 9:30am – 11am
- **Wednesday evenings**
  - 7:00pm – 8:30pm

No reservations needed. Drop-in fee is $10 per class and the 6th class is FREE. Call (708) 755-3577 for more information.

**Buddhist Meditation**

Learn and enjoy the simple, straight-forward practice of meditation. Please join us for sitting and walking meditation in the Zen and Theravadin Buddhist traditions. This is an ongoing event led by Steve McCabe and Beverly Feldt.

**Saturdays at 9am -10:30am**

**Location:** UUCC

**Cost:** Free Will offering (proceeds go to UUCC)

For questions, contact Beverly Feldt bevfeldt@gmail.com

**Drum Circle**

February 7th at 7pm

Bring your drums, rattles or any other percussion instrument and join us! Extra instruments will be provided if you don't have one. A love donation of $5 is greatly appreciated. All donations will go to UUCC.

**Love to Sing?**

Join the UUCC Choir! The Choir sings on the **2nd and 4th Sundays** each month, with rehearsals on those days at 8:30am and one weekday evening per month.

No experience required. If interested, email our choir director Bev Feldt at bevfeldt@gmail.com.

**Dances of Universal Peace:**

Meetings (Sept-June)

Dances of Universal Peace are held on the 2nd or 3rd Sunday of the month from 2-4pm at UUCC. We join our voices in singing sacred phrases and Divine Names from many spiritual traditions while moving in circle dances and walking meditations. More info Contact certified dance leader, Pat Segner, at 708-748-2217.

**DUP next meets on February 16th at 2pm**

**Connections Group**

Connections groups provide a space to share your perspectives and experiences, learn about and support each other, and discover what we have in common. All are welcome to attend, whether church members or not. Come join us!

**Daytime Group meets:** February 12 and February 26th at 1PM

**Evening Group meets:** To Be Determined

**The UUCC Men’s Group**

Men’s groups meet **every other Tuesday night from 7-9pm** at the church.

Upcoming gathering dates are **February 4th and 18th**

Contact Colin Kirchner at colinkirchner@gmail.com
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**Event Facilitators**

- **Monthly Drumming Circle:** Raegan Bricks [raegan.bricks@gmail.com](mailto:raegan.bricks@gmail.com)
- **Family First Friday:** (currently on break) Dan Feldt [ddfldt@gmail.com](mailto:ddfldt@gmail.com)
- **Yoga:** Karen Nielsen [shanti-one@comcast.net](mailto:shanti-one@comcast.net)
- **Men’s Group:** Colin Kirchner [colinkirchner@gmail.com](mailto:colinkirchner@gmail.com)
- **Dances of Universal Peace:** (off July & Aug) Pat Segner [segnerpatricia@yahoo.com](mailto:segnerpatricia@yahoo.com)
- **Rainbow Café:** Charles Barnett [chazbarnett@yahoo.com](mailto:chazbarnett@yahoo.com)
- **Forum:** Currently looking for a facilitator
- **Edgar’s Place:** Dave Rudolf [daverudolf50@gmail.com](mailto:daverudolf50@gmail.com)
- **Connections Group Day:** JoAnn Franczek 219/629-0815, Irene vanderHoek 708/305-4913 [tulip51girl@gmail.com](mailto:tulip51girl@gmail.com)
- **Connections Group Eve:** Rob van de Logt (708-973-1088) or Jodi Libretti (312-371-4713)
Church Information
70 Sycamore Drive
Park Forest, IL  60466
Office Phone:  708-481-5339
E-Mail: churchadmin@uuccpf.org
Website: www.uuccpf.org

This newsletter is designed, edited and published by Diane O’Connor
diane.oconnor@att.net
708-758-5715
(Please contact Diane for anything related to the newsletter).
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