



July-August 2011

[Save Water from your Summer Adventures](#)

Following international UU tradition, we will have a water communion ceremony and ingathering service on the first Sunday after Labor Day, when RE reconvenes and we begin another school year. Please save some water from wherever the summer finds you, whether it be on a grand adventure far away, or from the hose you use to water your garden or spray hot children. We'll combine all the waters, which we then combine with water from water communions of previous years, for use in rituals such as baby blessings. (Don't worry, I freeze the water to avoid the growth of small slimy creatures.)
Happy trails!

Nancy Irish
MUUC Celebrant and Coordinator

[UU Justice Trip and Special Collection for Palestinian Refugee Children](#)

Lindsay and Barb Michael are going to Israel and Palestine in July with UU's for Justice in the Middle East. Lindsay is going to stay for 4 months to teach English as a Second Language in Nablus. On Sunday July 10th, there will be a special collection to raise money for art and educational supplies which Lindsay will then use with Palestinian refugee children.

[RE News](#)

CAMP MUUC (pronounced MUCK)

We are in the process of planning for the 3rd Annual Camp MUUC hosted by Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Camp will, again, be located on Nancy Irish and Vince Villa's property and it is sizing up to be a fun weekend. We will utilize the talents of MUUC members and community members for activities including:

- Experiential nature activities
- Woods, field and stream exploration
- Peacemaking oriented arts and crafts
- Cooperation and team building games
- Yoga and/or Tai Chi
- Mindful community meals and camping (emphasis on local and environmentally friendly food)
- Campfire and music

The camp will run August 19-21 from Friday noon to Sunday noon for 7-14 year olds. A day camp for children ages 2-6 will be held Saturday morning 8:30-12:30. Families are welcome to camp for the entire weekend. See the attached registration form for details. Non-members are welcome!

Please register by July 31st as space is limited and it will help us with our planning. And, please share information with others who may be interested. **If you would like to share your talents or have questions, please contact Sarah Johnson #458-3915.**



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RE News Continued

RE Programming & Volunteer Request

During the 2011-2012 year, we will continue our exploration of World Religions. We are in great need of volunteers to fill the role of Teachers and Tot Watch. Please contact Kim Frost or Sarah Johnson, if you would like to assist.



OWL:

Slots are filling quickly for the Our Whole Lives (OWL) class that starts next fall for 6th-9th graders. There are only a few openings left so please sign your child up ASAP (or contact Melissa (906) 236-4433 or mlmelissa@live.com if you need more information).

OWL is an amazing program providing young teens with much-needed information and skills for moving into the years in which they become more aware of their own, and others', sexuality. The focus is on values-driven decision-making, abstinence and respect for others and self.

A second parent orientation meeting will be held in late August - early September (TBD). OWL classes will begin Mid-October. Please share this invitation with other families.

Summer Childcare

There are vacancies in the Summer Childcare schedule. The congregation provides childcare during the sermon portion of the Sunday service (after the children are sung out). The schedule is posted on the door leading into the community room.

Thank you to Michelle Harrison for her service as Committee Chair! You will be missed.

UU T-Shirt Art Night

gg gordon will be organizing a play date for adults and kids to get together, play with art supplies and in the process come up with one or more great designs for MQT UU t-shirts! Stay tuned for further info on this. The goal is to have fun, play with color, and have T-shirts available by Labor Day.

Taskforce

There will be a meeting of the Sexual Offender taskforce on Sunday, July 10th, after the service. The purpose of the taskforce is to develop a policy regarding sexual offenders who wish to become members of MUUC.

Email biancoblancowhite@yahoo.com if you are interested in attending and I will send you a reading list to view prior to the meeting.



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Green Team

Help! We need help beautifying our native wildflowers and plants (multiple beds and plantings on the MUUC property). We also need to eradicate the noxious purple knapweed (see below). Even if you only have 10 minutes, it would be greatly appreciated and make a huge difference! Please speak to Sari Embley, Alice McMahon or Gail Griffith and they will show you what needs to be done.

Invasive purple knapweed is a noxious wildflower plant on our MUUC property.

The plant's roots put out toxins that discourage any other plant growth in the soil, hence it spreads freely. Each plant produces approximately 1000 seeds per year, reseeding prolifically. Seeds remain in the soil for a few years too.

Help is needed to eradicate it from our land. Now is a great time to get rid of it! If you'd like to help, please choose a small area, and chop it now- before it flowers, chop it while it's flowering before it makes seeds, or pull it up from the roots.

If you chop it off before it's seeded, it will not need to be bagged, you can just put it in the dumpster. If it has seed heads or pulled up roots however, it needs to be put into black garbage bags tied tightly. Leave the black bag out in the heat at the end of the parking lot, or put in the dumpster. The roots need to be fried completely, or it can become invasive elsewhere at the landfill.

Always wear gloves when touching this plant, as contact with the stems can cause a rash.



Our hope is to clear our MUUC land of the noxious purple spotted knapweed, & we've had some success over the past few years already! Though it may take years of effort, we want to plant native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs and trees in its place.



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Meet Member: Don Robison *Part 2: Teaching Career, Years Overseas and the U.P.*

Don graduated from Central Michigan University in 1967, with a B.S in Education. His first job was in Farmington, MI, where he taught history and government. In the summer of 1970, he went to Europe for the first time. He stayed two months and loved it so much, he vowed he would go back. After one more year of teaching, he took a leave of absence and went to Germany to study German. Although he loved every minute, after half a year he grew a little homesick. He came back and finished his Master's degree in Education at Wayne State University. He continued teaching but found he was very unhappy after living in Europe, so he quit his job in the middle of the year. With no prospects, he went back to Europe in 1973 and stayed seven years. He taught in Germany at two Berlitz schools and the Frankfurt American Jr. High, a Department of Defense school.

Don first came to the Upper Peninsula in 1980 and spent that winter in Deerton in a somewhat worn-down log cabin on 40 acres that belonged to a former student. It was one of the most amazing experiences of his life. He was alone with his dog and cat and had a radio on which he could listen to Prairie Home Companion and NPR. He said he identified with our UU member, Teri, who spent the summer in a fire tower. Don substituted at schools in the area but was not pulling in enough money and was "gradually going bankrupt."

The next year he got wind of a job in Minnesota and went to teach in suburban St. Paul. From there, in 1984, he received a Fulbright exchange scholarship and went back to Germany, spending the year teaching in Tecklenbury, near Munster.

Back in the States again, Don began working for a Benedictine school, St. John's, near St. Cloud, Minnesota. It was a combination prep school and university. The school was looking for a German language teacher who would also lead exchange groups to Austria. Don and his students lived in a Benedictine monastery (there for 1,000 years; the actual building dated from the 1720s) which was one of the biggest tourist attractions in Austria. It had been turned into a public school and was still overseen by brothers and priests. One of Don's extra duties was taking the students to mass. They traveled to 16 countries as part of the program. Before long, however, the school experienced cutbacks; the number of students dropped from 300 to 200. A budget crunch ensued, and Don's position was eliminated after three years.

During these years, Don continued to hold on to his property in Deerton. He had bought out his friend and added more land to total 55 acres, with about 1,400 feet of frontage on both sides of the Laughing Whitefish River. Suddenly he was unemployed again and back in Deerton (in 1988), his only home. He knew he wanted to make his career teaching languages; in addition to German, Don had been studying



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French. Students loved language classes, an elective; it was a teacher's dream to have enthusiastic students. Don enrolled at NMU, aided by his unemployment checks, and continued to apply for teaching positions in social studies but his heart was not in it. On Labor Day weekend, he saw an ad in the newspaper that Marquette Senior High School was looking for someone part-time to teach German and French. The ad had his name written all over it. He was hired and taught in the mornings and continued to take classes at NMU in the afternoon. He took a French class to complete his minor and several Spanish classes. The following summer he went to Mexico through an exchange program and picked up some credits for a minor in Spanish. He was now teaching French, Spanish and German full time.

Don taught these classes at Marquette Senior High School for 22 years. The demand for a specific language varied. Some years he taught all three, other years more Spanish..... The high school eventually eliminated the German program but then he picked up more French. At one point, out of 1,300 students at the high school, 800 were taking foreign language classes.

The first year he was teaching in Marquette, he found an apartment in town. The little trailer he had on his property in Deerton was too small (8 by 45 feet) and could not be winterized, so he had a larger mobile home brought in. He always wanted a log cabin and, if he could have found one, he would have been very happy living off the grid with a generator and propane refrigerator. He thought, however, that he would like a really nice place so he built the biggest house he could afford. It turned out to be three stories, and the middle story is log. It's on the river, "a beautiful, gorgeous place and way too big" for him. He moved in eight years ago in May.

Don has planted lots of trees on his property, which was probably cut over twice, once around 1900 and again around 1950. He has a flower garden and has made maple syrup. He is not trying to be self sufficient. During the next three years, he is planning on working on his property, cleaning up the woods and planting trees. He put in 50 trees this year, white pine, red pine and red oak and is making trails with the help of a 4-wheeler which he uses to haul wood on a trailer. And he has a 19-year-old cat "who is threatening to outlive" him.

As Don continued teaching languages at the high school, he finished a major in Spanish at NMU. He got a call from NMU asking if he had a Master's degree (which he does). NMU wanted to hire him to teach Spanish; he said he did not have a degree in Spanish. NMU said it did not matter as long as it was a Master's degree. So in the evening, he took on a Spanish class, teaching college students who were commuting to Marquette. He worked four nights a week at NMU on top of a full day, every day, of teaching at the high school. The demand on his time became overwhelming so he arranged longer



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sessions for the college classes and only taught twice a week in the evenings. And he also taught some German at NMU. He kept at it, and when he eventually got his 30 years in, he retired from the public school system in 2009. The following year he accepted a one year appointment teaching Spanish full time at NMU and then completely retired in May of 2010.

Don is traveling more now that he is retired. He has said that part of his life can be summed up by the proverb in an old song, "How do you keep them down on the farm once they've seen Paris." That part of him is attracted to big cities. He likes Santo Domingo and Mexico City and Paris and Rome and London, all places he has been to. But the other part of him is "you can take the boy out of the country but not the country out of the boy." That part draws him back to the rural areas where he grew up and his place in Deerton.

Don continues to study languages. He is currently learning Italian through a teach-yourself language series called the Rosetta Stone, which is thought by some to be more effective in learning a language than traditional class work. Don is looking forward to teaching himself Russian and Swedish, languages he has dabbled in years ago. An anti-Viet Nam protestor in the 1960s, Don thought Sweden looked like a "promising" country for him if need be. He said if one knows English and German, one can almost invent Swedish. After these languages, he thinks he could squeeze in one more. He has thought of Arabic or Chinese or Japanese but it may be Portuguese or possibly Romanian....

Since he has retired, Don said he would probably be moving now if he hadn't invested so much in his house. He is planning on staying here three to five more years. Eventually he is hoping to spend the summer months in lower Michigan where his family still is. He would like to be in a condo or apartment in the Ann Arbor area, but out a bit where it isn't so expensive. He hopes to get a Vespa motor scooter to use as his main transportation. He does have a 1973, 750-four Honda, a collector's item which could help pay for the Vespa. And he will enjoy being near a major airport. In the winter months, he would like to be in a tropical climate, possibly Costa Rica where he has been four times. He spent a month in the Dominican Republic last winter and is going again in 2012.

Without any family in the area, he keeps in touch with former colleagues and enjoys his UU connections. He has always had pretty liberal ideas and from the time he was in college, the idea of building one's own theology has appealed to him about the UUs. It brought him to our congregation and has kept him here over the years.

Rachel Crary



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Sunday Services (11:00) -- Forums (9:45)

Date	Service	Forum
July 3	"Growing Seasons." Service Leaders: Caitlin Morski and Kathryn Morski from Escanaba	"Where Did You Get Your Ethics?" Host: Martin Steindler
July 10	"Waking Up To Shatter the Silence." Service Leaders: Barb Michael and Lindsay Michael	"Breakthrough UU Congregations." Host: Tom Sullivan
July 17	"Being Truly Free." Service Leader: Tom Spencer	TBA
July 24	Beach Service. Service Leader: Gail Simonds	TBA
July 31	"Varieties of (Religious) Belief at MUUC." Service Leader: Shaun Devlin	29 Tactics for Surviving the Hospital Stay: Local Author Mary Soper discusses her new book on Patient Advocacy." Host: Nancy Sullivan
Aug. 7	All U.P. UU Gathering at Van Riper State Park	TBA
Aug. 14	"The Shadow Knows: Dark Emotions Are Essential to an Enlightened Mind." Service Leader: Paula Kiesling	TBA
Aug. 21	Rev. Emmy Lou Belcher (elbelcher@comcast.net)	TBA
Aug. 28	"Spirituality Among Native Americans." Martin Reinhardt, NMU Native American Studies Program	TBA

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