

# 2007 MUUSJA Annual Report

January 27, 2008

## Notable MUUSJA

### Accomplishments:

- Supported direct action against the war in Iraq
- Helped train Social Justice leaders from across the Prairie Star District
- Mobilized UUs for LGBT fairness, Reproductive Choice, Climate Change legislation, and Fair and Accurate Elections
- Built a strong foundation for UU Social Justice work in 2008 and beyond



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## From the Board Chair

Jo Haberman

It has been a year of gaining momentum and moving forward! MUUSJA's 2007 highlights include:

Hiring our first permanent staff person—Ralph Wyman, MUUSJA Director and Organizer.

Organizing and supporting UU direct action on issues like ending the war in Iraq.

Supporting the work of three strong issue working groups: UU Reproductive Rights/Sacred Choices; UU EcoMinds; UU Voting Rights.

Nurturing our fourth group, UUs Out for Marriage, as

they begin planning for 2008 and beyond.

Offering leadership development opportunities for all UUs in Minnesota—including Rev. Valerie Ackerman's training last spring, "The Revolution Starts Now," and Rev. Bill Gardiner's December anti-racism training, the "Workshop on Whiteness."

THANKS to 2007 board members Marcy Leussler (FUS & EcoMinds), Lois Hamilton (Groveland Fellowship & UU Voting Rights), Steve Hughes (Unity & UUs Out for

Marriage), and Jack Harris (FUS, at-large)

And MANY THANKS to MUUSJA working group leaders and members, and all UUs who took part in actions, trainings, meetings, and events in 2007!

Together, we're building a public voice for UU values—and joining with partner groups in building a social justice movement!



Sacred Choices quilt at our Fall MUUSJA meeting

## Director's Report

Ralph Wyman

What an amazing year of changes, new efforts, and building on our excellent history this has been for MUUSJA.

I am incredibly proud of all the work that so many UUs are doing for justice through, and in partnership with, MUUSJA.

Since I joined the effort

in April of 2007, we've all accomplished a lot and have set goals and made plans for much in the year ahead. And of course much was done before I became your Director/Organizer.

Mark Ritchie kicked off our membership meeting cycle for 2007 by offering inspiration for "Renewing Our De-

mocracy: New Hope New Vision." At the spring meeting, MUUSJA offered "Interfaith Partnerships and Coalitions, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly" with Rev. Kendyll Gibbons, Lisa Hershberger and Carol Koepp. This past fall the membership gained a fuller understanding of—and lent full support to—the goals of our three main working groups: UU Voting Rights,

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## Finance Highlights

### Full year 2007

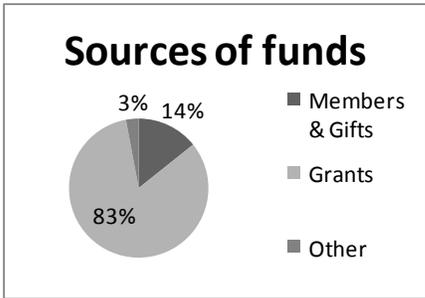
#### Income

Members, Congs. & Gifts	\$3,100.00
Grants	18,000.00
Events	640.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$21,740.00</b>

#### Expenses

Personnel & Professional	\$16,383.34
Office	2,457.58
Events, Travel, Other Exp.	3,236.52
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$22,077.44</b>
<b>Net operating loss</b>	<b>(\$337.44)</b>

MUUSJA received two significant grants from UU sources—the UU Service Committee (UUSC) and the UU Funding Panel (UUFPP). The UUFPP grant contained a \$4,500 challenge grant that can be released to MUUSJA in portions as we raise new dollars—in the form of new memberships and additional gifts from current members and friends. Based on our year-end fund drive, match amounts due would give MUUSJA a net operating surplus for 2007.



In 2007 MUUSJA invested in a new computer & software, a facilitated planning retreat, as well as leadership development for our volunteers and the larger UU community.

For 2008, MUUSJA will continue to build our individual and congregational support. See page 4 for more details on supporting us with your contributions.

## UU Reproductive Rights/Sacred Choices

The Reproductive Rights/Sacred Choices working group participated in Pro Choice Lobby day and hosted/supported events throughout 2007.

RR/SC offered the “Faith and Choices” 4-session workshop several times in 2007. This UU-tailored curriculum helps participants get a grounding in UU history and values on reproductive rights and

Pro Choice Lobby Day at the Minnesota Capitol will be Tues. March 4, 2008!!

sex ed, so they may find their own voice and position on the issues.

RR/SC worked closely with the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC-MN) on their “Faith and Freedom” banquet honoring many pioneering Minnesotans in the field of reproductive choice. Reproductive Rights/Sacred Choices members created a beauti-

ful quilt (pictured on page 1) for the banquet raffle—raising \$830!

RR/SC helped send 2 youth to SEAT (Sexuality Education Advocacy Training) in Washington D.C., where they learned to articulate their UU faith, develop lobbying skills, and have a significant impact in the community. SEAT 2008 is March 15-18, and space is still available!

Contact Jody at [spice777@aol.com](mailto:spice777@aol.com) or (612) 669-9977 to join the work of Sacred Choices.

## UU Voting Rights

The UU Voting Rights working group led an important workshop on Election Integrity at the PSD conference in Minneapolis last spring.

Voting Rights has held multiple educational events—screening such documentaries as “Help America Vote on Paper,” which provides an overview of election integrity; “Voter Cag-

ing,” which looks at voter disenfranchisement; and “The Trouble with Touchscreens,” which covers issues of data integrity and voting.

Film events are coupled with action steps and have been offered at multiple UU locations and a Hennepin County library. Voting Rights collaborates frequently with the

**UNCOUNTED:**  
The New Math of American Elections  
MN Premiere at the Riverview Theater,  
Wed., Jan 30th, 6:45 pm

Center for Election Integrity and the League of Women Voters.

Also, see Ralph’s Director’s Report to read about Co-chair Jennifer

Thomas’ Resolution success at G.A. 2007!

Contact Jenny at 612-920-4246 or [jjthomas@skypoint.com](mailto:jjthomas@skypoint.com) to join the effort!

## Director's Report (continued from p. 1)

UU EcoMinds, and UU Reproductive Rights/Sacred Choices.

This past year MUUSJA brought together board members, work group members, supporters and a UU facilitator for a day-long retreat. This informed an extensive and ambitious work plan for our organization – a plan that supports and guides us well into 2008.

MUUSJA had a presence at two major UU gatherings – the Prairie Star District conference in Minneapolis and General Assembly (GA) in Portland. MUUSJA partnered with PSD and FUS to offer a pre-conference leadership training day.

At GA, we partnered with the UU State Advocacy Networks (UUSAN), a consortium of organizations like MUUSJA working to build a UU social change movement, to offer both a Social Justice workshop and an information booth.

Jennifer Thomas (MUUSJA Voting Rights Chair) led the charge for a big success at GA. She worked tirelessly for a resolution in support of election integrity, and a Responsive Resolution was passed!

August brought the UU State Advo-

cacy Networks together again, this time on Beacon Hill in Boston. We were very pleased to have UUSC Director Charlie Clements and UUA President Bill Sinkford join us for parts of our meetings. The UUSANs agreed to work together, as a network, on climate change throughout 2008. It is gratifying to know that UUs in multiple states are working in concert on this crucial issue.

The fall has brought the return of lots of activity in our MUUSJA working groups. I hope you will look over the brief news items from each group here in the Annual Report (and know that each group does *much* more). Contact a group to connect to their work, and check the calendar of events on page 4.

Our work groups do an outstanding job, and it is a testament to our commitment to justice that all this



Betsy Allis and Ralph Wyman, GA 2007, Portland.

work is done by volunteers giving so generously of their time and talents.

Fall also brought an important collaborative workshop. We joined with aMaze, United Theological Seminary and FUS for a day of training. UU Bill Gardiner brought his “Workshop on Whiteness” to a large and very engaged audience. Our thanks to UU seminarian Catie Chi Olson for her leadership in bringing this event to the Twin Cities.

MUUSJA is committed to offering significant trainings like this and the “Revolution Starts Now.” Building UU social justice leadership skills is the foundation of a successful lay-led and faith-based social justice effort like MUUSJA.

Leadership at the board level is also crucial to the work of MUUSJA. We have a strong core of committed and effective board members who are planning for the future of MUUSJA and our powerful UU justice work.

And there is room on the board for more involvement. MUUSJA is a statewide effort (we moved beyond “Metro” in 2006), and board representation from additional UU congregations is a key goal for 2008.

Feel free to contact me anytime with questions about MUUSJA and our programs. Contact info is on p. 4.

## UU EcoMinds

UU EcoMinds has been working tirelessly to educate UUs about climate change, to work to promote sustainability practices in congregations and in UU homes, and to promote legislative action to combat the greenhouse gases that lead to global climate change.

EcoMinds Strategy  
Session Tues., Feb  
12th, 7 pm  
First Universalist,  
3400 Dupont S, Mpls.

EcoMinds worked together with many environmental partners to help get major climate change legislation passed during the 2007 Legislature — laws requiring 25% renewable electricity by 2025, and requiring utilities to increase customer conservation by 1.5% per year.

In 2007 EcoMinds again took the lead,

with partner Congregations Caring for Creation, to organizing a conservation/green energy/climate change booth at the State Fair—with many thousands of fairgoers as their target audience!

EcoMinds also worked to get over 160 UU households signed up for the Minnesota Energy Challenge! (Visit [www.mnenergychallenge.org](http://www.mnenergychallenge.org) to sign up.)

Contact Ralph at [ralph@muusja.org](mailto:ralph@muusja.org) or 612-998-6624 to join EcoMinds.

# Calendar

Keep up with all the events — sign up for our e-news alerts at:

[www.lists.muusja.org/mailman/listinfo/muusja](http://www.lists.muusja.org/mailman/listinfo/muusja)

## January

**30<sup>th</sup> - 7 pm** EcoMinds—Focus the Nation video-cast of “The 2% Solution.” Multiple sites: FUS, 1st Univ., Unity, WBUUC, MVUUF

**30<sup>th</sup> - 6:45 pm** Voter Rights—Documentary: “UNCOUNTED.” Riverview Theater, 3800 42nd Ave S, Mpls. 612-729-7369

## February

**4<sup>th</sup> - 10 am** Sacred Choices—“Faith and Choices” 4-week begins. 1st Universalist, 3400 Dupont S, Mpls.

**Events will be added throughout 2008. Keep in touch!**

## Feb (cont)

**12<sup>th</sup> - 7 pm** EcoMinds-Strategy Session. Help set legislative and mobilization goals! 1st Universalist, 3400 Dupont S, Mpls.

**13<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 pm** Repro Rights/Sacred Choices leaders meeting (all are welcome). 1st Universalist, 3400 Dupont S, Minneapolis

**21<sup>st</sup> - 7 pm** MUUSJA Board meeting. Visitors warmly welcomed. Unity Unitarian, 732 Holly Ave, St. Paul

## March

**3<sup>rd</sup> - 6:30 pm** Sacred Choices—Power Up for Pro Choice Lobby Day! 1st Universalist, 3400 Dupont S, Mpls.

**4<sup>th</sup> - 10 am-3pm** Pro Choice Lobby Day at the State Capitol

**11<sup>th</sup> - All day** Minnesota Environmental Partnership Lobby Day at the Minnesota Capitol

## April

**17<sup>th</sup>—Noon** JustFair Lobby Day for LGBT rights at the Minnesota Capitol

## Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance

122 W. Franklin Ave.  
Suite 303  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

612-998-6624      [ralph@muusja.org](mailto:ralph@muusja.org)

MUUSJA: Bringing UUs together to work collectively for social change

Visit us online  
[www.muusja.org](http://www.muusja.org)

MUUSJA is supported in part by the UU Funding Panel, the UU Service Committee, & by your memberships and gifts.

Thank You!



The Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance is a multi-congregational organization with a mission to bring together UUs to work collectively for social change by:

- ◆ Building a strong and lasting social justice organization
- ◆ Preparing UUs to use a reflection, action, collaboration model of change
- ◆ Developing a distinctly UU moral voice, based on deep exploration of our UU values and legacy
- ◆ Waging campaigns in coalition with interfaith and secular partners to achieve winnable systemic change
- ◆ Shifting the political climate toward a social agenda that serves the common good.

**Help fund MUUSJA!** Your contribution may be matched as much as dollar for dollar through a generous UU Funding Panel grant. Memberships are \$50/individual, \$100/household. Gifts and limited income memberships may be made at any level.

Mail your check payable to “PSD-MUUSJA” to:  
Prairie Star District/MUUSJA, 122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 303,  
Minneapolis MN 55404.

Or contact us at [ralph@muusja.org](mailto:ralph@muusja.org) or 612-998-6624 for more information about making a financial contribution to MUUSJA.