



Owen Brown Interfaith Center

NEWSLETTER

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The President's Report: Annual OBIC Report - 1986

Thanks to the warm spirit and enthusiasm of this Board's directors, I have never enjoyed serving on a board more than I did this year as the President of OBIC. Every time volunteers were requested, several stepped forward. You were all terrific to serve!

This year the Board set 29 goals for themselves - an ambitious task, especially for a one year period. In less than 10 months the Board completed 22 of their 29 goals! Their accomplishments include the publication of this newsletter three times, a joint Methodist-Unitarian coffee hour in May, renting space to a new congregation - the New Life Church, organizing workdays, cleaning up the conference room, developing a rental brochure, increasing rental activity, conducting an inventory, installing sinks and toilets in the day care space, preparing a long range maintenance and repair program, cleaning up and assigning the "Mushroom Farm" storage space, obtaining a donation of new cabinets for the conference room and office (and installing them!) and developing architectural plans for adding 2 classrooms and several closets to the "Mushroom Farm."

I owe a special thanks to all who have helped this very busy year. Without your support, through activities or kind words, OBIC never would have had such a successful year. Please forgive me if I inadvertently overlook anyone in the following acknowledgements and appreciation to:

- The Methodist and Unitarian boards, especially Ed Suarez and Don James, for their work in appointing such excellent OBIC directors.
- Delores Wardwell, our vice president, for her diplomacy and tact in keeping us on track and out of each other's hair (!).
- Phyllis DiPiano, our treasurer, who set up our records professionally

and resolved our outstanding tax issues.

- Gail Marjarum, our former Operations Committee chair who organized our operating procedures, met with all of our tenants, increased our rental activity and cleaned up the "Mushroom Farm."

- Stephen Leslie, our former building manager who saved us over \$5,000 on the installation of the sinks and toilets and who superbly guided us through our first 1½ chaotic years.

- Gene Berg, our plant repair and improvement committee chair who led the cabinet installation crew and resolved countless other building problems.

- Janet Spicer who obtained the donations of cabinets and the installation of a street sign.

- Bill Libby for spearheading the conference room clean up, insisting on our ambitious list of goals and serving so diplomatically during trying times!

- Paul Meyer for the long term maintenance and repair program.

- Lee Hertz for always handling countless repairs and chores.

- Eileen Henderson, our secretary, for persisting in the worst of times.

- Suzanne Young for co leading our Annual Craft Fair 3 years in a row and raising over \$6,000. Gerri Wiggins and many others for their help this year.

- Jeff Bourne for building our beautiful sign.

- Ann Iseri who chaired our Program Committee and published our newsletter.

- Frances and Phil Miller and Connie Schwab for their many long hours in caring for our plants and grounds.

- Bob Wordwell for his professional and thorough analyses of partitions.

- Jeff McCormack, our attorney, who successfully fought the Mechanic's lien with practically no compensation.

- Ed Coale, our accountant who prepared our depreciation schedule and tax return without full compensation.

To each of you and all the others who helped with their words and deeds, I thank you for caring so much.

Ken Walsh
OBIC President - 1986

ON SHARING

When our children are growing up we try to encourage them to share their toys. I have a three year old son who is very possessive about his toys. He will not allow anyone to play with his special superman figure. One of the key experiences in being involved in an Interfaith Center is learning the art of tactful sharing. On Sunday if one congregation makes a mess or is too loud it disturbs the other congregation. For financial survival the Center must be rented out as much as possible to pay the operating costs. If you have ever served on an active church committee you might have experienced some of the frustrations in finding the building in use when you want to use it, or finding that someone has made a mess in the room before your meeting. What seems to happen over time is that a wonderful sensitivity develops among the active members. People become more sensitive about leaving a mess, making a lot of noise, or expecting a room to be available without reservations. My experience, from the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center, is that after people go through the numerous little "battles" involved in sharing a building they eventually become very resilient and flexible in working with others. For me, it is one of the hidden benefits of an Interfaith Center.

Stephen W. Leslie

P.S. I have decided to leave the Owen Brown Interfaith Center after 1½ years. That's about as long as I could handle two jobs at once. Gail Marjarum has been selected to take my place as the building manager. I wish you all the best of luck in running your building.

AN INTERVIEW WITH STEPHEN KENDRICK

By Helen Rogers

Stephen Kendrick was attending a Creative Writing School in Virginia when he got to know the chaplain there, who first introduced him to Unitarian Universalism. "I decided that becoming a Unitarian Universalist minister was what I wanted to do because it seemed a good meeting point for a lot of my interests: writing, counseling people, and public speaking," he says.

Stephen attended Harvard University Divinity School from 1978 to 1980. During his senior year there he thought he might like to be Jewish. His parents were Episcopalian. He does not feel that he has turned away from Christianity by becoming a UU minister. "Unitarian Universalism," he explains, "gives me the opportunity I need to explore. I often call Unitarian Universalists Protestant Jews. There is a Jewish prayer which says: 'God is One and God's name is One.' This is in a sense Unitarian Universalism. We espouse one world, one people and one truth: love."

Before coming to the UUSHC Stephen had worked in England in 10 small chapels in Birmingham (average size 15 members). He then worked as a student minister in the First Parish of Lexington, Mass. for three years.

When he first came to Columbia, 2/3 of his job was to be here as call minister. The other 1/3 of his time was spent as an extension minister in York, Pa. Both groups grew quickly enough so that he able to go full time with Columbia earlier than was planned for. When he came to Columbia in 1981,

(Stephen Kendrick, cont'd)

the membership was 140. Now it is approximately 290, and he is justly proud of his following. "It is good partnership between the congregation and myself," he explains. "It is really the character of the congregation that makes something like this possible. But," he adds, "doubling the size is not completely positive. There have been growing pains. Sometimes on a Sunday, when people see so many new faces, it is a bit overwhelming. The group has to create more and more small groups, so that people will really get to know one another. I think that in another year or two the growing pains will be alleviated. As long as I am here, I will set up challenges, so that growth in terms of program and outreach to the community is possible."

When asked what he likes best about being a minister in the UUSHC, he answered: "I like the sense of involvement in people's lives. I have seen young people mature and other people get gray. I find that a rare gift to be offered --access to other people's lives. Also I love public speaking and I like the opportunity to spout off my opinions."

Stephen met his wife, Liz, when she lived near where he went to school -- in Roanoke, Virginia. They have been married seven years and have a son, Paul who is three. They are expecting another child in May.

"I like writing," says Stephen, "and would like to put more time and effort into that. I like to draw and paint and soon I will put up a 6x8 canvass in our living room. I see the ministry as fitting into a larger creative life. Ministry is creativity with organizations and with people."

(Helen is a free lance writer who lives in Columbia.)

FINISHING OFF THE BASEMENT

In the Spring the Board approved the architect's plans to finish off the basement (also known as the "Mushroom Farm") and create two additional classrooms with several closets. We have now received five bids including one from two members of one of our congregations. Our building manager, Gail Marjarum, plans to award a contract on December 23 to the lowest qualified bidder. Please contact her before December 22 if you are interested in reviewing the architectural plans and submitting a bid.

PARKING

To ease the parking squeeze during Giant's construction program, we have contacted the Howard County Police regarding parking on Cradlerock Way. It is legal to park there anytime, however, do not park on the little bridge between Roy Rogers and Giant, and leave 100 feet clear before all streets and drives so people can see when turning out.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY PARKING has been arranged with Roy Rogers and Mobil for the late services on Christmas Eve. Both businesses will be closing early, at 8:00 p.m. This means those lots will not be available for the early services.

If you can, please try to carpool. Also it might be a good idea to establish a ferrying system from the village center parking lot. The footpath between there and here is dark and rough and not recommended.

A joyous and safe holiday to you all.

Gail Marjarum, Manager

NOTICE!!!!

PUT FEBRUARY 4, 1987 ON YOUR CALENDAR. On February 4, 1987 the OBIC will sponsor a Red Cross Blood Collection. It will take place between 3 and 7 P.M. You will be hearing more about this so mark your new calendar now!

CRAFT FAIR UPDATE

Thanks to the diligent effort of many hardworking people, our Third Annual Craft Fair was a success. The day's efforts earned OBIC a profit of approximately \$1,650.00. Youth groups from CUMC and UUSHC developed and "ran" games for the children and each group will receive their profits (\$60) to support their special projects or activities. Our bake sale was a sell out once again with loads of "goodies" going forth into the world at large. Spice sachets, rose bookmarks, cross-stitch bread napkins, cat nip mice-- all these crafts and more made by members of both congregations were on sale.

Once again, an appreciative "thank you" to all who helped to make the day an exciting, well organized and profitable venture.

Jerry Wiggins, UUSHC
Suzanne Young, CUMC