



THE TOUCHSTONE

A quarterly publication of the Unitarian Church of Hinsdale

Summer 2017

Unitarian Church of Hinsdale

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Childcare and education
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UCH Spring Thing 2017 Summary

by Jill Jackson

Our inaugural Spring Thing annual fundraiser, held on Saturday, April 8 from 5:00-9:00 p.m., was an amazing celebration of us and the fun we have together. It was a success based on our social and financial goals.

Our First Two Spring Thing Goals

1.) Build and strengthen our community

The Spring Thing is the driving force for setting our annual social calendars with its 25 events and party sign ups. These activities are spread out from April 2017 to March 2018, averaging two events each month. I thank you for your generosity for the many amazing opportunities to help build and strengthen our community and relationships.

2.) Raise at least \$27,000

For starters, I got the number wrong. I was under the impression that the last Holiday Harvest raised \$27,000 so that was the number to reach. However, that number turned out to be \$18,000.

That said, the **Spring Thing was a financial success!** We raised more than \$23,000, which is 28 percent higher than our last auction; and, more importantly, it is 7.5 percent of our annual budget. Woo-hoo! Congratulations everyone-we rocked! Be proud of how we rallied together to raise such an impressive and unequalled amount in one evening. Next year's goal: \$25,000.

A Spring Thing Snapshot

Weather

It was a beautiful sunshiny day with temperatures in the low 50s. What made the day even more beautiful was that it followed what felt like weeks of rainy, cold weather.

Attendance

It was a great crowd. We had 113 people attend the Spring Thing: 98 members (41 percent of our congregation) and 15 guests. Ticket sales totaled \$2,375.

Silent and Live Auctions

During the four hours of the Spring Thing, we raised a total of \$18,500 during both the Silent and Live auctions in roughly a 60/40 split, respectively. Thank you to the members of our congregation, kids, and friends whose hard work brought in 122 unique personal and business donations totaling 385 items on which to bid. That was just crazy amazing!

Sponsors and Advertisers

We were incredibly lucky to have raised \$725 from our sponsors and advertisers. Please support these businesses as a sign of our gratitude for their generous support: Kramer Foods, The Wellness Path, AgeWell Solutions, Art Therapy Heals, David P. Lloyd attorney at law, Fair Isle, Hinsdale Capital Investments, Jane's Blue Iris, Pet Necessities, Primerica, Taste of India, and West Suburban Veterinary Associates.

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Nature and Spirituality

Pam Fodor

Director of Religious Education

With so much time spent with technology, the National Wildlife Federation declares, "The nature of childhood has changed. There is not much nature in it." Getting outside in nature has been found to reduce childhood obesity, boost classroom performance, and spur imagination. New research reveals that nature also affects how children define spirituality.

A study published in a recent issue of the Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture reported that children who spend time outside for five or ten hours a week say they feel spiritually connected to the earth and believe that it is their role to protect it. Research also supports that those children who spend more time outdoors have a stronger sense of self-fulfillment and purpose compared to those who don't.

There is a Jewish tale of a rabbi who finds his son reading the Torah, while sitting in a tree. The father asks, "Son, don't you know that the wisdom of the Torah is the same, whether you are in the synagogue or in a tree?" The boy answers "Yes that is true, but I am different when I read it while sitting in a tree."

With this sense of nature in mind, I encourage you also to keep your child's spiritual education going during the summer months. Get outside and have some fun!



A Fun Walk in Nature

Turn a walk in the forest preserve into a treasure hunt by making a check-off list of things to find: an acorn, a big leaf, a little leaf, a duck foot print, whatever might be available. Be sure to take paper and some crayons to make bark rubbings! Or wear a nature bracelet —

wrap duct tape around your wrist (sticky side out), and see what you collect on your walk.

If you take a walk around your neighborhood, you and your child can search for flowers in all the colors of the rainbow. Or take along paint sample sheets from the hardware store, and see if you can match the colors.

Visit a zoo! We like Brookfield Zoo a lot, but also check out the Cosley Zoo in Wheaton. It is much more manageable for smaller children, and you can pet many of the farm animals.

Or just lie outside in your yard and watch the clouds float by and have a picnic.

Whatever it is you can do

each day- do it with joy. Enjoy our natural world and the time you have with the ones you love! ●

...the National Wildlife Federation declares, "The nature of childhood has changed. There is not much nature in it."



Are You Willing to Serve on the Worship Committee?

Jill Jackson
Worship Associate

Have you ever wondered how the services are prepared, who comes up with the topics and themes, how people get picked to do the readings during church or why Dave Lloyd does sermons on tree frogs, leeks, Shakespeare, and throws his cell phone down the stairs?

We are very lucky to have a minister like Rev. Pam Rumancik, who willingly shares her pulpit with the congregation to help lead worship in our church.

This Worship Committee consists of a small group of people and currently includes: Linda Rio-Reichmann (Worship Circle Coordinator), Susan Hebble, Jill Jackson, Dave Lloyd, Pat Miller, Kathy Salzano, Mikhaila Scoville-Durante, and Ron Solberg. The term commitment for each member is two years with staggered terms to maintain the group's continuity.

Ongoing meetings take place every four to six weeks for training and planning purposes. Meetings are typically scheduled on Saturdays from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., but are juggled around based on the needs of the group.

We start these meetings by lighting a chalice, listening to a short reading, and taking turns checking in. It's a great way to re-center, leave what we need behind, and focus on the tasks at hand.

Sometimes to prepare for a meeting, we collectively read

a chapter or two from books or articles on worship. Other times, Pam may send a link to a video or a TED talk for us to watch. They give us ideas and perspectives to consider for enriching our worship.

We always share our thoughts and feedback on aspects of previous services—what worked and what didn't. It's fantastic when members of the congregation give us their thoughts for us to take back and share with the Worship Committee. This helps us gain additional insights for improving our services or for reaffirming that we're on the right track.

Reluctant to stand up front during a service? You can still be a part of the Worship Committee...

During two of our meetings, once in the fall and spring, the Worship Committee plans and scopes out worship for the upcoming four months. Our summer meeting is a retreat and is more comprehensive; we focus on the overall planning for the upcoming year and cover areas such as direction, mission, and themes.

Worship Committee members also participate in Sunday services between four and eight times per year as the Worship

Associate. Plus, each year they may also conduct and lead an entire Sunday service or two on their own. This is done by working with Rev. Pam to discuss the readings, songs, skits, stories, and anything else that may fit into their service.

Reluctant to stand up front during a service? You can still be a part of the Worship Committee even if getting up in front of the church isn't your thing. There is a lot of work that needs to be done that doesn't require public speaking.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Worship Committee or would like to learn more, please email Linda Rio-Reichmann lindarr@comcast.net or Rev. Pam Rumancik minister@hinsdaleunitarian.org. All Worship Associate candidates are required to complete a comprehensive Application for UCH Worship Associate Form that includes 14 questions.

New members are affirmed by the Worship Committee, in tandem with Rev. Pam, with the hope of seeking a wide variety of people representing diversity in age, race, experience, and outlook.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to hearing from you and getting to know you better at the Worship Committee meetings. ●

— Jill Jackson
jillnmijackson@gmail.com
(312) 231-9870

Who Are Your Caring Circle Captains?

(Save this to use later!)

In our efforts to provide support to our church community in times of need, transition and celebration, our Caring Circle is available for our congregation.

Our ability to provide support is made possible not only by the many volunteers who offer their time, but also by the information that is provided to us so that we may reach out to those in need.

The Caring Circle provides support and coordinates assistance such as phone calls, cards,

visits and emails and is able to provide assistance that may include simple errands, rides, meals and small chores.

Please refer to the area listing and contact information below.

Please note that due to new volunteers stepping forward, and also to changes in the UCH congregation, you may have a new Caring Circle captain or be in a different area than you were previously. ●

AREA 1

(Hinsdale, Clarendon Hills, Burr Ridge)

Deborah Stillman — (630) 908-7508

Pam Fodor -- (630) 795-0295

AREA 2

(Willowbrook, Darien, Westmont)

Catherine Goering (630) 325-0310

Jen Hopkins -- (630) 488-9889

Sandy Buboltz -- (530) 6137099

AREA 3

(Indian Head Park, Western Springs, Willow Springs)

Susan Hebble — (708) 784-1688

Gail Stone -- (708) 354-7797

AREA 4

(Elmhurst, Villa Park, Bensenville, Des Plaines)

Lynn Brackett — (630) 279-5851

Mary Getty — (630) 833-3082

Karen Hays — (630) 209-9340

AREA 5

(Westchester, Brookfield, River Forest, Riverside, Chicago, Berwyn)

Nancy Kranz -- (708) 603-2932

Nancy Keane -- (708) 352-0454

AREA 6

(LaGrange Park, LaGrange, Countryside, Hodgkins)

Nancy Weill -- (708) 352-9128

Megan Griffin -- (708) 314-0644

AREA 7

(Downers Grove, Lombard, Oak Brook)

Cathy Zimmerman -- (630) 810-0561

Jill Jackson -- (312) 231-9870

AREA 8

(Woodridge, Plainfield, Romeoville, Shorewood, St. Charles, Glen Ellyn)

Paula Sejut Dvorak --(815) 210-1909

Janice Sejut -- (630) 207-2856

Decorations/Graphic Design

John Cooperrider worked tirelessly, and his decorations transformed the church building into a garden oasis. He also created the logo and design layout of the Spring Thing Auction Catalog. John is nothing short of magical. He makes the world more beautiful.

Auction Management Software--- www.biddingowl.com

I used an auction management software, www.biddingowl.com, to run the entire Spring Thing. This cloud based software system enabled us to do everything including managing all donors, items, solicitors, advertisers, and sponsors. We used it to print bid sheets and the catalog descriptions for the auction items. It was our online auction catalog for 122 unique items on which to bid. It gave everyone an opportunity to view the items and plan their bidding strategy for the event. It was also our check-out and invoicing system. We heard that attendees loved receiving the emails from BiddingOwl.com alerting them to the items they won.

Please check it out at www.biddingowl.com/UCHSpringThing. We plan on using it again next year and may consider doing an online auction prior to the event.

Food

Tim Dvorak planned a spring menu of deviled eggs, appetizers, fruit, veggies, three types of pizzas, and amazing chocolate cupcakes. Tim never disappoints! He even prepared an entirely separate menu for the 18 kids attending the Kidsapalooza!

Open Bar

John Wayman-Dodd generously provided all the alcohol for the Spring Thing. At the end of the night, as a double bonus of generosity, he even donated his tips!

Wine Pick

Julia Beckman and Nancy Weill served as the Spring Thing Sommeliers to a sellout crowd. William Diehl even sold a bottle of wine that he had already paid for to match the demand. Thank you!

50/50 Raffle

Kate Stiles, Connor Stiles, and Maddux Valencia ran the 50/50 Raffle raising \$250. Lynne Bracket was the winner and she generously donated her half back to the church. Thanks Lynne!

Entertainment

Jeff Teppema's band The Whiskey Brothers, a traditional Irish drinking band, played two sets. Between those sets, Fred Zimmerman wowed us with his mentalist skills leaving us asking, "How did he do that?"

Kidsapalooza

Pam Fodor planned a fun evening for the kids that included games, crafts, a movie, and a magic show by Peter Krouwer. The kids loved it.

Spring Thing Supporters!

The biggest money maker of the night was far and away the Spring Thing Supporters! We are always collecting money for causes: global warming, feeding the hungry, countering injustice in the world; the list is never-ending. The Spring Thing was about having fun and celebrating us, and we did just that.

Twenty people—18 percent of the Spring Thing attendees—donated \$2,125 in our honor. Thank you to our inaugural Spring Thing Supporters!

Our Last Goal—Personal and Business Donations

On this goal, we fell a little short.

All members/friends make at least one personal donation (e.g., service, activity, or event); and, bring in at least one business donation.

65 Business Donations

Approximately 60 percent of all business donations were secured by:

- Jill Jackson, 25 (40 percent)
- Darren Howard, 12 (20 percent)
- 40 percent of the other business donations (28 of them) were secured by 20 people:
- Only 4 people brought in more than one business donation.
- \$4,500, 25 percent of the money raised came from business donations.

57 Personal Donations

- 9 kids made 8 personal donations and raised a total of \$750... Kid Power!
- 41 people made 49 personal donations.
- \$14,000, 75 percent of the money raised, came from personal donations.

The good news—our personal and business donations helped us hit home runs with our social and fundraising goals. We had a spectacular evening!

The bad news—only 9 percent of our congregation secured a business donation and 21 percent made a personal donation.

Please consider: if we did this amazing in our first year of the Spring Thing, can you imagine what we could have accomplished if the other 80 percent had gotten involved and the other 60 percent had attended this event?

Spring Thing Summary

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There's really no limit of what we can achieve together!

Thank You

I want to thank you all of the people who stepped up to lend a hand throughout the Spring Thing (in no particular order): John Cooperrider (Decorations/Graphic Designer), Debbi Daniel-Wayman (Fair Trade), Julia Beckman (Wine Pick), Nancy Weill (Ticket Sales/Wine Pick), Becky Baudler (Flowers), Kris Grady (Flowers/Food), Anita Jencks (Flowers), Noreen Costelloe (Ticket Sales), Lily Field (Accounting), Linda Liberacki (News & Notes/Website posting), Paula Sejut-Dvorak (Tickets/Check-out/Clean-up), Cathy Blanford (Ticket Sales), Tim Dvorak (Food), Jean Noble (Food), Charlie Fischer (Food), Bonnie Wayman-Dodd (Food), John Wayman-Dodd (Bar), Jim McDonald (Check-out/Clean-up), Peter Krouwer (Entertainment), Laurie Pittelli (Food), Karen Porter (Online Catalog Editing), Suzanne Williams (Check-out), Dave Lloyd (Emcee), Pam Fodor (Live Auction), Tiff Schafer (Data Entry), Gene Schafer (Data Entry), Linda Rio-Reichmann (Check-out), Marian Honel-Wilson (Clean-up), Susan Mooney (Ticket Sales/Pre-Auction Prep/Check-out), Rich Lomasney (Clean-up), Karen McDowell (Ticket Sales/Clean-up), Pam Rumancik (Live Auction), Jeff Teppema (Entertainment), Fred

Zimmerman (Entertainment), Sara Teppema (Data Entry/Check-out/Girl Friday), Darren Howard (Ticket Sales/Business Donations/Pre-Auction Prep/Clean-up), Shane Stiles (Data Entry/Check-out), Kate Stiles (50/50 Raffle and Live Auction), and Connor Stiles (50/50 Raffle).

I know from experience, that by naming names, there's a high probability that I left someone off this list. However, it's more important for me to say thank you than not. By taking this risk, I apologize for anyone that I may have overlooked and I thank you.

Do You Have Any Photos of the Spring Thing?

Did you happen to take any pictures at the Spring Thing? If so, would you please send them to me at jillnmijackson@gmail.com? I took a bunch of photos before the event, but I don't have any of the actual event. It would be great to have them going forward to document the fun we had together at our very first Spring Thing. I'll make sure to remember for next year!

Requesting your Spring Thing Feedback

What did you think about the Spring Thing? I would really appreciate it if everyone could send me an email or give me a call (if you haven't done so already) to tell me your thoughts and give me feedback about the Spring Thing. The good, the bad, and the ugly...all comments are welcome, and they will help make the Spring Thing even more amazing moving forward.

If you didn't come, why not? I'd love to hear your thoughts too. Thank you for taking the time to share.

Save the Date

Please mark your calendars and save the date for our 2nd annual Spring Thing on Saturday, April 28, 2018, from 5:00- 8:00 p.m.

Spring Thing 2018 Challenge

My Spring Thing 2018 challenge to you is simple...get involved. The Spring Thing is our biggest fundraiser of the church year. It cannot be done single-handedly. An event of this size cannot continue without greater support from the congregation. There is a role for everyone. What are your strengths, your gifts, and how are you willing to help? I look forward to working with you next year, making new friends, and reaching higher goals.

Dedication and Thanks

The Spring Thing is a celebration of us... and all the fun we have together! Thank you so much for participating in our first annual Spring Thing. I hope you thoroughly enjoyed the event and that it exceeded your expectations.

With gratitude,

Jill Jackson, Spring Thing Chair
jillnmijackson@gmail.com or
(312) 231-9870. ●

