

Interfaith News



May/June/July - 2009

Executive Director

Shannon Clark

Executive Committee

Robert Bacic, Convener

Singh Sahib Karta Purkh S. Khalsa

- Co-Convener

Rev. Dr. Kara Hawkins, Secretary

Lama Chuck Stanford, Treasurer

Council Members

American Indian Spirituality -

Rev. Dr. Kara Hawkins

The Baha'i Faith - Barb McAtee

Buddhism - Lama Chuck Stanford

Christianity - Orthodox - Fr. Paisius Altschul

Christianity - Protestant -

Pastor L. Henderson Bell

Christianity - Roman Catholic - Robert Bacic

Hinduism - Kris Krishna

Islam - A. Rauf Mir, M.D.

Judaism - Susan Choucroun

Paganism - Caroline Baughman

Sikh Dharma -

Singh Sahib Karta Purkh S. Khalsa

Sufism - Cathy Knight

Unitarian Universalism - Rev. Kathy Riegelman

Vedanta - Linda Prugh (uma)

Zoroastrianism - Daryoush Jahanian, M.D.

At-Large Members

Susan Cook

Rev. Patricia Longstroth

Rev. Mary McCoy

Rev. Dr. David Nelson

Pam Peck, C.S.

Fred Schuele

Mahnaz Shabbir

Sheila Sonnenschein

Mission: We are growing a sustainable, pervasive culture of knowledge, respect, appreciation, and trust amongst people of all faiths.

GKCIC Sponsors

The NAINConnect 2009 Experience

The 2009 NAINConnect begins Friday morning, June 26 and runs through the 28th at Unity Village. Interfaith groups from all over the country come together once a year to network, learn, and deepen relationships with one another. It's a memorable conference experience. The theme this year is: "Experiencing the Spirit in Education: The Challenge of Religious Pluralism." NAIN and the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council have joined together to sponsor this year's event.

The goal of the three-day conference is to bring higher education and the grass roots organizations and leaders together in the spirit of learning from one another. Organizers feel privileged to host Professors and Leaders from the highest centers of education. For information on presenters, please visit www.nain.org.

The Unity grounds in eastern Jackson County Missouri are beautifully peaceful. There are walking trails and paths that lead down to a beautiful lake. Many tree-covered grassy areas are inviting for personal meditation or a group discussion. And June is a gorgeous month in Missouri. Please consider joining us for the entire weekend or for one day. We want you to experience NAINConnect. For registration information, please visit www.nain.org.



Unity Wings

Interfaith Youth Alliance Meeting

Sunday, April 26th, the Interfaith Youth Alliance (IYA), a joint program with the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council and several adults from various organizations interested in engaging youth of the Greater Kansas City area, met at the 3HO Kundalini Yoga and Sat Tirath Ashram to learn about the Sikh faith tradition and discuss future plans of the IYA. Karta Purkh S. Khalsa along with other members of the ashram spoke about the Sikh faith and answered questions that ranged from "Why do Sikhs wear turbans?" to "What does the Sikh faith teach about other religions?". The youth, along with the adults present, participated in an "ice breaker" activity presented by students from William Jewell College. The group then broke into smaller groups to discuss the future plans of the IYA. Ideas for future activities included an ice-cream social, an interfaith lock-in and various service projects. The IYA is open to all youth ages 13-20 from all faith backgrounds. For more information contact Shannon Clark at shannon@kcinterfaith.org or 913-548-2973.

See photos on Page 2.

Interfaith Youth Alliance Photos



Bill Tammeus, Shannon Clark and four teens gathered at the Sat Tirath Ashram to discuss future planning for the Interfaith Youth Alliance.



The Interfaith Youth Alliance met at the 3HO Kundalini Yoga Center and Sat Tirath Ashram on Sunday, April 26th to learn about the Sikh faith and discuss future plans for the group.

Warm Gathering on a Cold Day

The Interfaith Council, Hatebusters, and the Barker Memorial Cathedral of Prayer held a Human Family Reunion on Saturday, March 7, at the Cathedral to affirm faiths, honor Hatebusters, and come together in love and fellowship. These events erase all racial or theological divisions as all attending share in God's love through songs, mini-sermons, stories and inspiration. As is customary, participants are allowed three minutes to convey heart-felt messages. These gatherings always include a delicious potluck meal. Everyone left filled and full of a sense of oneness. The occasion also celebrated the birthday of Queen Mother, a strong and active participant in the healing and uniting aspects of the Interfaith Council, Hatebusters and her own Barker Memorial Chapel.

Mark Your Calendars!

GKCIC "Kansas City: A Neighborhood of World Religions" Workshop Rescheduled (for Clergy, Lay Leaders, Students, Teachers and other interested individuals)

The workshop, formerly scheduled for March 25th, has been rescheduled for Wednesday, September 30th, 2009. The workshop will be held at the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, 13720 Roe Ave. in Leawood, from 9 am – 3pm. The workshop will provide an overview of the following faith traditions presented by members of the Council: American Indian, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. The day will be facilitated by KC Star columnist and founder of the GKCIC, the Rev. Dr. Vern Barnet. The cost of the workshop is \$65, which includes a pastry breakfast, box lunch and beverages. Please email or call Shannon Clark at shannon@kcinterfaith or 913-548-2973 to register.

U.S. Military Rejects Sikh Service

On April 14, 2009, the Sikh Coalition based in Washington DC, began a campaign to end the ban on Sikhs in the U.S. Army. The Coalition is acting on behalf of two Sikh army recruits – Captain Kamaljit Singh Kalsi and Second Lieutenant Tejdeep Singh Rattan – who are being forced to choose between their religion and their service.

The men, both medical professionals in the Army, are being told that they must remove

their religiously-mandated turbans and cut their unshorn hair and beards when they report for active duty in July.

On July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman officially desegregated the United States Armed Forces. In his Executive Order, the President promised equality of treatment and opportunity for everyone who chooses to serve.

Theologian is Annual Speaker at KU Dept. of Religious Studies

Professor Peter Gomes, beloved African American Baptist minister of the Memorial Church at Harvard University, noted author and faculty member of Arts and Sciences and Divinity, addressed a sizable audience in the KU Student Union Ballroom on Monday evening, April 27th. His topic, "Transformation and Non-Conformity: A New Christian Identity," expanded on the first two verses from Romans 12 in the Bible: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." He urged the audience to be "a living sacri-

fice," not rote, going through the motions of worship, but lively, vital, and fully engaged; not conforming to the prevailing culture, but constantly renewing the mind, which was meant to be used; to be thoughtful, thinking believers. Believers need not be afraid of intellect. It can and should stand alongside of faith. Jesus urged his followers to love God with all their heart, soul, and mind. The value of religion is in the discovery and celebration of its meaning and purpose. Ministers must feed the hunger of their congregations for deeper theology. Religion is enjoying a resurgence in our society right now, and there is a great curiosity about global faiths, especially on college campuses.

All great men have struggled with God. Religion transforms us and the world. It cannot be best learned solo, but from others' shared thoughts and experiences. The beatitudes, or "happitudes," help to transform the world, re-creating it as it ought to be. Be agents for change, not conforming or subjugating ourselves to prevailing sentiment. Be contrarians for noble purposes. Worship services should engage the congregation with sermon, text, and hymns, causing listeners to reflect with a balance of mind and spirit. Science and religion are compatible, in fact science should enlarge one's concept of God. Reported by Pam Peck

GKCIC at Ft Leavenworth Education Unit



GKCIC members spoke with members of the US and foreign military units at the War College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, recently about their faiths in an effort to promote understanding in the intense emotional atmospheres that are often involved in combat zones. The members also participated in a panel discussing the merits of dialogue within and between religious groups as a way of defusing and solving conflict situations. The members are: from left, Karta Purkh Khalsa (Sikh); Father Paisius Altschul (Christian Orthodox); Lama Chuck Stanford (Buddhist); Dr Daryoush Jahanian (Zoroastrian) and Linda Prugh (Vedanta.)

Barclay Martin Concert



When David Nelson welcomed the 'full-house' crowd to the Barclay Martin Ensemble's "Concert Conversation," at All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, Saturday, April 18, he declared: "Tonight you are going to hear some of the best music in Kansas City!" Applause throughout the program confirmed that the audience agreed. Dr Vern Barnet and GKCIC Executive Director, Shannon Clark warmly welcomed the audience as the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council, co-sponsored the concert with CRES.

All of the four young musicians who make up the folk-jazz ensemble has have impressive resumes: Barclay Martin, vocals and guitar; Mark Lowrey, piano; Giuliano Mingucci, percussion; and Rick Willoughby, bass and vocals.

Between musical selections, David Nelson led the audience in Neighborly Conversation, and with Vern spoke with the musicians about their work. The focus of the evening's selections of music was to present a musical expression of the wisdom of the world's various faith traditions.

In the second half of the program, a 5-minute trailer from a film documentary was shown. Produced by the Christian Foundation for Children and Aging, a lay-Catholic international organization that aids the poor in 24 developing countries, it showed life in the Mindanao area of the Philippines. The film, "Zamboanga: Poverty, War, Music," was a moving look at young people there who were

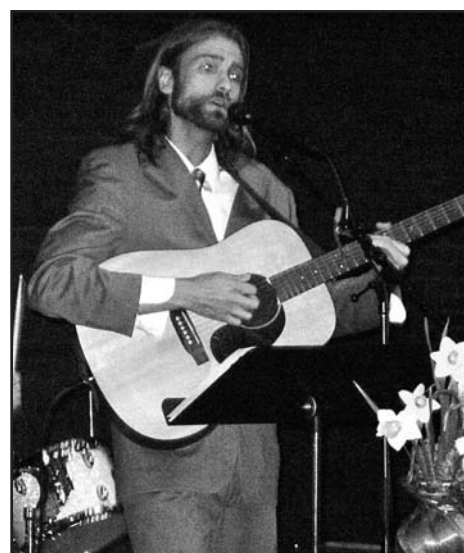
taught to play traditional instruments and who became the headlining act for a concert attracting 10,000 people. Barclay Martin, who wrote the soundtrack for the documentary, introduced it, saying: "These people have overcome extraordinary challenges, and they teach how to live richly, how to live joyfully." The documentary will be released soon. Visit www.zamboangathemovie.com

The capstone of the evening was the three-part interfaith suite, commissioned by Vern Barnet and composed by Martin. "Fields of Rain," deals with the environment; "The Alchemist" talks about the pressure on ourselves by the perceptions of society; and "The Tower & the Teacher" deals with our true identity. Here are some lyric excerpts from that work:

from "Fields of Rain"

*I'll steer this lonely vessel
to the safety of the harbor
But the passages are littered
With the artifacts of progress
The water's laced with poison and
It's pulsing through my veins
As the mother of the mystery
Lays down in fields of rain*

*Delicate as branches
Fragile as the frost
we become the measure
Of all that we have lost*



from "The Alchemist"

*The Alchemist ties you up tighter
Arraigned by the wires
Of justice and pain
And these visions of envy
That brought your surrender
Has everyone doing the same*

from "The Tower & the Teacher"

*Maybe someday you will finally recall
that the wealth of a nation resides in us all
May you wish for compassion
You'd lost out at sea
That was buried beneath an anchor of peace*

The audience gave a long, appreciative standing ovation for this moving montage that anyone of any faith, or of no faith, can relate to.

The Importance of Gratitude

by Lama Chuck Stanford (Buddhist)

We usually think of being grateful at Thanksgiving, but I think an attitude of gratitude is important all year long. In fact, it is a very important part of Buddhist practice. Meister Eckhart, a great Christian mystic of the 13th century, said, "If the only prayer you say in your life is 'Thank you,' that will suffice."

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, and confusion into clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.

The Buddha said: "Let us rise up and be thankful, for if we didn't learn a lot today, at least we learned a little, and if we didn't learn a little, at least we didn't get sick. And if we did get sick, at least we didn't die. So let us be thankful."

All too often we choose to focus on the things that are not going right in our lives. But remember these three laws of how we create our own reality:

- Reality is created in the moment.
- In each moment there are multiple realities.
- What we choose to focus upon becomes our reality.

So we can choose to be stuck in suffering, focusing on our past mistakes and worrying about the future. Or we can choose to focus on what is going right in our lives.

No matter what our situation is, there is always something we can be thankful for. Being thankful for what we have can make all the difference. One of our Rime members told me that at every meal his family stops and thinks about what they are thankful for that day. They share their gratitude with each other.

Daigaku, the Zen Priest who was in Kansas City recently, was telling me that in the Zen tradition before meals they also say a prayer of gratitude. I honestly believe that if we spent some time each day being grateful, we would be much happier. Recently I visited the Buddhist inmate group at the United States Disciplinary Barracks. One of the inmates told me about being out on the yard and seeing an incredibly beautiful sunset. He related to me how he commented to another inmate about the beauty of that particular moment. The other inmate said, "Yeah, but it would be a lot better if we didn't have to see it through that stinkin' chain link fence." The first inmate didn't mind the chain link fence. He could just enjoy the beauty of the moment. The second inmate missed the beauty of the moment because all he could see was the fence. Practicing gratitude can make all the difference.

There is a wonderful story about gratitude involving Argentine golfer Roberto de Vicenzo. After winning a tournament, receiving the check and smiling for the cameras, he prepared to leave. While walking to his car he was approached by a young woman. She congratulated him on his victory and then told him that her child was seriously ill and near death. Touched by her story, he took out a pen and endorsed his winner's check to the woman. "Make some good days for the baby," he said as he pressed the check into her hand.

The next week he was having lunch when a PGA official came to his table and said: "Some of the guys told me you met a young woman after you won the tournament." DeVicenzo nodded. "Well," said the official, "She's a phony. She's not married. She has no baby. She fleeced you, my friend."

"You mean there is no baby who is dying?" asked DeVicenzo. "That's the best news I've heard all week!"

DeVicenzo was not angry or upset that he had been fleeced. Instead, he was grateful that there was no dying baby.

In a recent issue of the BuddhaDharma Magazine, an article by Daido Looi Roshi described the following: Imagine an experiment involving two people. One is asked to spend ten minutes each morning and evening expressing gratitude (there is always something to be grateful for), while the other is asked to spend the same amount of time practicing complaining (there is always something to complain about).

One of the subjects says: "I hate my job. I can't stand my apartment. Why can't I make more money? My spouse doesn't get along with me. That dog next door never stops barking, and I just can't stand this neighborhood."

The other is says: "I'm grateful for my health. What a gorgeous day. I really like this fall breeze." They take part in this experiment for one year. It is guaranteed that at the end of the year the person practicing complaining will have deeply reaffirmed all his negative "stuff" rather than having let it go, while the one practicing gratitude will be a very grateful person. (Editor's note: There's no doubt who was happier.)

What we practice is what we are; practice and the goal of practice are identical. Cause and effect are one reality. Expressing gratitude can, indeed, change our way of seeing the world and ourselves. So let us take time every day to stop and think about things we are grateful for.

Zip Code 64130 Not a “Murder Factory” but “Holy Ground”

Over two hundred people from denominations in the area of zip code 64130 met on April 8 in response to a three-part series in the KC Star labeling their neighborhood as a “murder factory.” The meeting was initiated by Father Ernie Davis, of St. Therese Little Flower Parish, for the purpose of affirming that their neighborhood is in fact “holy ground,” in reference to God speaking to Moses in the desert by the burning bush: “The place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” Each pastor or representative was given a few minutes to uplift and affirm the power of united prayer to reclaim the neighborhood. Some of the inspired messages shared were:

Reference to Gideon, who was in hiding when Israel was intimidated by a powerful occupiers. The need to arrest hopelessness, inequity and despair, to stand up to systematic injustice and to forces that lure youth into destructive activ-

ity, and to let it be known that there is help and hope in “the hood.”

We are not defined by what we hear or read. People can call you anything they want, but you don’t have to answer to it. Answer to the name, “Overcomer.”

The courts, prisons, and police can’t do it. The power is in the people and their prayers. The spiritual community is the moral compass for the community as a whole.

References to Jeremiah 29, where the children of Israel in captivity are called to rebuild Jerusalem, multiply and be prosperous, and “seek the peace of the city.”

The need to work not only for protection of the residents of the neighborhood, but also to let the youth know they are embraced in our love and our concern for their lives.

The need for city-wide understanding that the

problems in one area impact the entire metro-community.

The congregation was reminded of the many positive and effective programs and activities at work in the area, such as CCO, “unlocking the power of the people,” and the specific plans for government funds to this community coming from the new administration.

Choirs, praise dancers and hymn singing completed the program. Those present left with a determination to work together for resolution and restoration.

Reported by Pam Peck

Life Connections Program - Help for the Incarcerated

NOTE: Talib Shakir is an inmate at Leavenworth. Council member Rev David Nelson (Christian) is part of the Life Connections Program in Kansas at the State and Federal prisons there.

By Talib Shakir

The Life Connections Program at the United States Penitentiary in Leavenworth Kansas is one of five institutions where there exists a program of change, which incorporates spirituality as the focal theme for change. Unlike other programs that focus on change, it incorporates spirituality as its primary theme.

One of the unique things about this program is that while the overall objective is to reduce recidivism, it uses interfaith activities and dialogue to aid in bridging the gaps that exist between the different races, ethnic backgrounds and religious beliefs of the world.

The participants must attend a series of workshops and seminars during their eighteen-month stay in the program. Throughout they are encouraged to address the anti-social behaviors that led them to prison. These

workshops and seminars include, but are not limited to, journaling, impact of crimes on victims, fatherhood, alternative to violence, money management, religious tolerance and more. The participants must also participate in daily prayers and weekly accountability groups where they are expected to hold each other accountable for their daily spiritual journey.

• **Spiritual connections**

The participants must also complete a series of workshops that aides them in going deeper into their faith to find the spiritual connections that are needed to lead an honest, productive and crime-free life. The books used in the workshops include those that deal with Faith Specifics, Spirituality, Building Blocks to a Healthy Life, Family Issues, Religious Tolerance, Conflict Management and others. There is also a three-volume workbook that the participants must complete in order to graduate. These books deal with making the right choices through responsible thinking.

By far, these books have received the most positive feedback from many of the participants. It has also been noted by graduates that

what they learned in these books has become a cornerstone for leading productive lives now. Understanding the importance of spirituality and tackling the irresponsible thinking of a person who has lived a life of committing crime can lead to a reduction in recidivism.

The participants have weekly classes where they are instructed by spiritual guides. These are people who volunteer their time to come in and teach these men more about the faith that they follow. These volunteers often travel many miles to come in even in inclement weather. This in itself shows these men that serving others is contrary to the selfish lifestyle that many of them have led in the past.

• **Richness of Understanding**

One of the most valuable experiences of the program is that the participants live in a housing unit where the diversity of different faiths exist and is respected. Having the opportunity to learn of other faiths, study other faiths, attend classes with people from other faiths and most importantly form strong friendships with people of other faith backgrounds has really allowed these men the opportunity to experience the richness of understanding, which so

many other people desire.

The unit houses approximately 150 inmates and the religions range from Orthodox Islam, Protestant Christian, Christian Roman Catholic, Native American, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, and Jehovah's Witness as well. The program is open to all other faiths without discrimination. This experience gives these men a chance to find alternatives to crime. In the typical institutional setting, the inmates generally seclude and separate themselves from people of other religions, which closes the door to alternative thinking and solutions. The participants in the LCP have been given the opportunity to socialize and seek advice from people of other faith backgrounds different

from their own.

• **Coexistence is possible**

It is remarkable how these men can come together and co-exist peacefully and respectfully in a small housing unit where there are certainly more differences than similarities.

As a participant in the program, I cannot fully express the many benefits that I have gained. Nor can I fully explain everything I have learned from the other participants. But what I can say is that I am more informed now and that I have a deeper appreciation for what other people believe in. My attitude is certainly more respectful than it was prior

to joining the LCP. I have gained a wealth of knowledge and information that I will always carry with me.

I have made new friends whom I will always honor and cherish: friends who share the common goal of respect, love, honesty, concern, and peace. Until we as people begin to understand and live by these concepts without regard to different religious creeds, etc... there will always be chaos, hate, and violence in the world. But with the continuous help of the staff members of the LCP, and the hard work of its many participants, there is hope. Keep us in your prayers. Peace

Raindrop Turkish House hosts Interfaith Roundtable Meeting



Those present were: Back Left to Right: Larry Guillot-GKCIC, Donnie Morehouse-ACLU, The Rev. David Nelson, DMin-The Human Agenda, & GKCIC, Dan Winter-ACLU, Fatih Ozcan-Institute for Interfaith Dialogue, Murat Tatli-Raindrop Turkish House and Cultural Center, Front Left to Right: Judy McMeachum- Festival of Faiths, The Rev. Mary McCoy- Cultural Crossroads, Shannon Clark- GKCIC, Priscilla Wilson- Festival of Faiths, The Rev. Vern Barnet, DMin- CRES & Faith Columnist for the KC Star,

Not pictured but also attending were: Bill Tammus- author and former Faith Columnist for the KC Star, Oguz Kan - The Raindrop Turkish House & Cultural Center, Mahnaz Shabbir-Crescent Peace Society & GKCIC

The Greater Kansas City Interfaith Roundtable is a collaboration of the GKCIC, The Human Agenda & CRES hosted on Wednesday, April 8 by the Raindrop Turkish House in Lenexa, KS (<http://www.raindropturkevi.org/kansascity/>). Fourteen individuals attended the third quarterly meeting to meet one another, share about current programming and discuss possible future collaborations.

The meeting, facilitated by David Nelson, DMin., began with a reading of a poem entitled "The Power of the Tongue" written by a participant in The Life Connections Program (an interfaith program at USP Leavenworth).

Each participant shared their statement about "the power of the tongue" or words in their personal spiritual and faith tradition.

Participants introduced themselves and shared about their organization. The purpose of the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Roundtable is to: 1) raise the awareness of groups in the KC area that focus on interfaith issues; 2) clarify each group's special skills, directions, vision, and programming; 3) explore whether we can better coordinate our work, such as through a central calendar, co-sponsorship of programs, mutual promotion of certain efforts that benefit cooperating organizations; and 4)

generally deepen the understanding and trust between individuals and organizations that are sharing a common vision.

Through the interchange we hope to discover new ways we can serve the metro area and strengthen our community's welcome and celebration of religious diversity. The next Greater KC Interfaith Roundtable is scheduled for July 8, 2009, location TBA. Please contact Shannon Clark at 913-548-2973 for more information.

Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council
P.O. Box 415
Louisburg, Kansas 66053
Website - www.kcinterfaith.org
Return Service requested

Non Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit 3657
Kansas City, MO



DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT DELAY

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY

Tuesday Documentaries: Every Tuesday 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 4501 Warwick. No charge. 816-531-2131 for details.

May 1-2, Fri-Sat. **Human Family Reunion.** Fri at Yates-Gill Union; May 2, noon Washington Park. HateBusters@aol.com.

May 6: 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. **Interfaith Dialog series,** session three, giving Jewish perspective. "Repairing Our World; What Are Our Obligations to Others?"

May 12, 6:30 p.m. and May 13, 9:30 a.m. **Volunteering at Harvesters.** www.jewishkansascity.org or 913-327-8108.

May 7: **Anniversary of opening of Hindu Temple and Cultural Center of Kansas City.**

May 7: First Thursday, 6 PM. **Group discussion, "Quantum Metaphysics."** Christian Science Reading Room, 112 (Red Bridge Rd) and Holmes. South side. Judy Crotchett, jrcrotchett@everest.net, 913-498-2151.

May 13: **Vital Conversations. Mountains beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure the World,** by Tracy Kidder. 1:00 p.m. Antioch Branch, Mid-Continent Library.

May 13: **World Falun Dafa Day.**

May 19: Talk on "**Genuine Manhood and Womanhood: Your Sacred Identity, Freedom from the Adam and Eve Dream,**" by Ryder Stevens, C.S. 7:00 p.m. Plaza Library, 4801 Main. Sponsored by area Christian Science churches. christianscienceck.com, 816-931-1832.

May 22-25, Fri-Sun, **The Stone People's Dance, Tall Oaks Christian Conference Center.** Stumbling Deer and Kara Hawkins. Contact slusher@earthlink.net, or 913-362-0904.

May 30: **Jazz and Beyond Concert featuring "The Goombahles."** 8:00 p.m. All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 4501 Warwick. 816-531-2131 for details.

JUNE

Tuesday Documentaries Every Tuesday through June 30, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 4501 Warwick. No charge. 816-531-2131 for details. June

June 4: First Thursday, 6:00 PM. **Group discussion on "Quantum Metaphysics."** Christian Science Reading Room, 112 (Red Bridge Rd) and Holmes. South side. Judy Crotchett, jrcrotchett@everest.net, 913-498-2151/

June 10: **Vital Conversations. Cleaning Closets: A Mother's Story,** by Beverly Cole. 1:00p.m. Antioch Branch, Mid-Continent Library.

June 11: "**Healing Violence through the Christ Love**" by Christine Driessen, JD. Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church, 7:00-9:00 P.M. Panel discussion on violence in neighborhoods follows.

June 11: Talk on "**Healing Violence through the Christ Love: Effective Prayer for Families, Communities, & the World,**" by Christine Driessen, CSB JD, of Boston Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church. Location TBA. Sponsored by area Christian Science churches. christianscienceck.com, 816-931-1832.

June 25-28: **NAIN CONNECT 2009: Unity Village. "Experiencing the Spirit in Education: The Challenge of Religious Pluralism."** www.nain.org

JULY

July 2: First Thursday, 6:00 PM. **Group discussion on "Quantum Metaphysics."** Christian Science Reading Room, 112 (Red Bridge Rd) and Holmes. South side. Judy Crotchett, jrcrotchett@everest.net. 913-498-2151.

July 8: **Vital Conversations. The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions,** by Wayne Teasdale. 1:00 p.m. Antioch Branch, Mid-Continent Library.

CALENDAR OF OBSERVANCES

May 9: **Buddhism and Vedanta:** Anniversary of Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death.

May 17: **Baha'i: Feast of Azamat (Grandeur).** The Feast has spiritual, administrative, and social functions, and is the primary locus of fellowship and community decision-making in each Baha'i locality.

May 19: **Hinduism:** Birth Anniversary of Hanuman.

May 23: Baha'i: The community commemorates this date in 1844, when the Bab, the prophet-herald of the Baha'i Faith,

announced in Shiraz, Persia, that he was the herald of a new messenger of God. One of 9 holy days of the year when work is suspended.

May 24: **Catholic:** Feast of the Ascension: Jesus ascends into heaven after his death and Resurrection.

May 28 sunset to 30 nightfall: **Judaism:** Shavuot: One of three pilgrimage holidays, this one commemorates God's giving of the Torah and celebrates the harvest of first fruits.

May 29: **Baha'i:** Ascension of Baha'u'llah: Anniversary of the death in exile of Baha'u'llah, prophet-founder of the Baha'i Faith, May 29, 1892. One of 9 holy days of the year when work is suspended.

May 31: **Catholic:** Feast of Pentecost: The Holy Spirit comes to the followers of Jesus in rushing wind and tongues of fire.

June 6: **Baha'i:** Feast of Nur (Light).

June 16: **Sikh** Martyrdom of Fifth Sikh Guru Arjun by Mughal Emperor Jahangir. Before his death Guru Arjun had compiled most of the Sikh Scriptures.

June 24: **Hinduism:** Jagannath Puri Rath Yatra – a chariot procession.

June 25: Baha'i: Feast of Rahmat (Mercy).

July 4: Vedanta: Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda who gave up his body on July 4, 1902.

July 7: Vedanta and Hinduism: Guru Purnima during which the great line of spiritual teachers is given special honor.

July 9: Baha'i: Martyrdom of the Bab. Commemorates the anniversary of the execution of the Bab, (Siyyud 'Ali-Muhammad), the herald of the Baha'i Faith, by a firing squad on July 9, 1850, in Tabriz, Persia. One of 9 holy days of the year when work is suspended.

July 19: Islam: 'Isra / Maraj'.

July 29 sunset to 30 nightfall: **Judaism:** Tisha B'Av. A day of mourning and fasting in commemoration of the destruction of the first and second Temples, which were both destroyed on this day in 586 BCE and 70 CE), and of the Jewish expulsion from Spain in 1492.

July 31: **Hinduism:** Varalakshmi Vratham. A special worship performed by married women on behalf of their husbands.