

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE, Selected:

Wakefield Unitarian Universalist church, *President* **2008-current**

Along with the traditional tasks of a Board President, I also fill additional roles including: **Editor of the monthly newsletter** since January 2008, **Webmaster** since 2002, and **Rental Coordinator** since the early 2000s. This latter role includes selling and negotiating agreements with individuals and organizations that rent space in the building and assisting with wedding and other ceremonies that take place in the sanctuary.

Wakefield Climate Action Project, Inc., *Co-founder, Clerk, PR, Webmaster* **2007-current**

Founded in February 2007, WCAP was recently incorporated and is now applying for 501 (c) (3) (nonprofit) status. Current projects include the Walking School Bus, the Wakefield Farmer's Market, and a lecture series at the local library. In addition, WCAP always has an educational presence at local festivals and other events throughout the year and works cooperatively with like-minded organizations in our community. WCAP has a special affiliation with groups inspired by the Wakefield Creative Revenue Forum, such as the Green Team (environmental) and the Wakefield Initiative (downtown Wakefield revitalization).

Wakefield Energy Conservation Committee, *Chair* **2007-current**

The ECC was appointed in November 2007 and charged with responsibility of researching and creating a Request for Quotes from Performance Contracting companies and then recommending a company to the Board of Selectman. This company will enter into a contract with the Town and implement energy and water-saving projects that will be paid for out of the short and long-term savings rather than increasing taxpayer costs. The ECC finalized their recommendation and presented it to the Board of Selectmen in the latter half of February 2009. An initial agreement was signed by the Town and Johnson Controls over the summer of 2009.

Wakefield Interfaith Food Pantry, *Director* **2001-2004**

One of my most rewarding volunteer experiences used many of my professional talents. As the Director of the Wakefield Interfaith Food pantry from 2001-2004 I accomplished the following:

- Recruited a 10 member Board of Directors, pro-bono legal and CPA services, and coordinated the successful application for 501 (c) (3) status, awarded December 2002.
- Developed easy to follow systems for soliciting donations, recruiting volunteers, and organizing logistical details for major projects such as Thanksgiving and December holiday baskets and the Letter Carrier Food Drive.
- Expanded the volunteer base from 10-15 elderly folks to 35-40 solid volunteers of all ages who now share the responsibilities of running the food pantry.
- Created opportunities for young people to volunteer for special projects such as sorting large food donations, cleaning/painting the food pantry room, and publicizing the needs of the food pantry
- Inspired, via press releases, letters of solicitation, and public speaking, many local civic groups, professional organizations, and local businesses to organize food and fund drives for the food pantry.
- Increased fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and food drives to support the almost triple increase of requests for services over the 3 year period I was Director.

As the church liaison to LTC, I handle kitchen logistics and oversee set-up and breakdown for the 10 or so shows each year. I also maintain the website including writing the copy and also design and write copy for all of the flyers.

Additional Volunteer Projects:

- Created and coordinated the **Love Lives Here** event at the Wakefield-Lynnfield Methodist Church on 9/14/02 in response to the white supremacist group that was meeting at our library at the same time
- Producer of the annual Winter Solstice Celebrations at the UU Church [on hiatus as of 2009 but hopefully with return in a year or so!]

August 28, 2002

Anti-racist group: Give peace a chance

By Jill Anderson
jill.anderson@cnc.com

Some residents want to offer an alternative to the racist speech planned by World Church of the Creator leader Rev. Matthew Hale at the public library Saturday, Sept. 14.

While the locals aren't sure exactly where their same-day event take place or what the agenda will be — plans will be discussed at a public meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 3 at the library — they are sure it will include something of a peaceful and educational nature.

" This is about Wakefield being a community of tolerance, diversity, and solidarity, " said Phil Posner. " The community has been through a lot of tough things. This hate isn't consistent with our values. "

The idea to hold a peaceful alternative began with resident Wendy Dennis, best known for her work as director of the Interfaith Food Pantry.

Dennis said this is something she felt as a private citizen she needed to organize and isn't tied to any religious views.

" I don't want this to go ignored in the town, " Dennis said. " People are upset and people are outraged that a meeting like this is being held in town. I would like to plan a positive event that can be happening at the same time, but because of safety issues it won't be happening at the library. "

Exactly what the event will be remains unknown at this time.

Many people in the community have already signed on to the peace event such as the local Boy and Girl Scout troops, Rev. Kay Evans, Rev. Peter Brown, and there is some additional talk that the Clergy Association of Wakefield may also participate.

" What this community is about is coming together, not spreading hate, " Posner said.

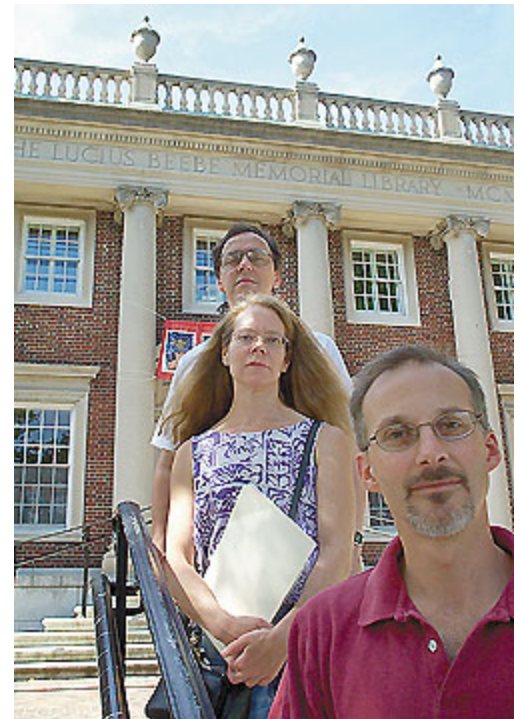


PHOTO BY JILL ANDERSON
Wakefield residents, from left, Rev. Peter Brown, Wendy Dennis and Phil Posner plan to hold a peaceful educational event on Saturday, Sept. 14, at the same time that the leader of the racist group, World Church of the Creator, will be speaking at the local library.

Resident Michael Pierce, who is also a cub master for a local scouts troop, urged that their organizations get involved.

" This is a prime example of what scouting can be about, like teaching kids diversity, " Pierce said. " I think it's great to do something and not have it be confrontational. We don't know what will happen, so we don't plan to expose anyone, especially kids, to any violence. "

Pierce, an attorney, said he already plans to use material to educate people about their rights under the Constitution at the event.

Dennis said it's important to avoid a riot or protests against the WCOTC.

" We don't want to encourage people to be here at the library that day, " Dennis said.

Brown said by now most people are aware of the event happening in Wakefield.

" My advice is to pay no attention to him (Hale), " Brown said. " There is a need now to have a positive response somewhere else in the town. "

The planned appearance by the WCOTC leader has brought back memories of an incident last year when racist literature was spread on residents' lawns.

" In my opinion, these people feel powerless and don't have advantages or control of their lives, " said Dennis. " But it's an ego-boost joining a group like this, where they can blame problems on everyone else. "

" The WCOTC people may be Americans by birth, but they are not Americans by heart, " Pierce said. " I hope we will demonstrate what Americans are really about. "

Those wishing to become involved or seeking more information on the peace event can attend a meeting Tuesday, Sept. 3, at 7:30 p.m. at the Lucius Beebe Library.

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To the Editor, September 15, 2002 The True Spirit of Wakefield

We want to extend a big THANK YOU to everyone who was involved with planning of, or who attended, the *Hate May Visit...but Love Lives Here* gathering that was held at the Wakefield Lynnfield Methodist Church from 1:00 –3:00 pm on Saturday September 14th.

So many people helped make this event a reality; indeed, the list is too long to fit in this letter! But this was truly a group effort. From those who attended the first planning meeting on September 3rd, the people who participated by emailing or phoning in suggestions, the core group of folks who were on the committees or volunteered for specific tasks, to the people who attended the event, many of whom pitched in on that day by bringing cookies or taking on vital last-minute tasks.

We would especially like to thank the Wakefield Lynnfield Methodist Church for letting us use their social hall and for providing great logistical support, as well as the beverages for the event. We also appreciate the wonderful support we had from the Wakefield Police Department, The Wakefield Interfaith Clergy Association, John Encarnacao and the entire Board of Selectman, as well as Mike Festa, Steve Maio, and Mark Falzone. And, our thanks to all the local merchants who displayed our flyers and to Gregory's for loaning us beautiful plants to dress up the stage area. Another special thank you goes to WCAT for taping the entire program.

It was an amazing event, and it truly did reflect the true spirit of our town.

The Love Lives Here Volunteer Planning Committee

Celebrating Solstice

By Gary Band Wed Dec 27, 2006, 12:39 PM EST Wakefield Observer

In the beginning there was the Unitarian Universalist Church — or the First Universalist Society established in 1839, that is. And while for many years it flourished, alas there was no official Solstice celebration in Wakefield until the year 2000.

Held on the shortest night of the year, Dec. 21, the first day of winter, the church has now done seven celebrations, bringing light to darkness, song to silence and a mummer's play to the once empty stage for the over 100 people in attendance.

Created by the former Wakefield UU minister, Edmund Robinson, who left the church in 2004, the 90-minute celebration organized by church member Wendy Dennis includes readings — such as the 12 days of Christmas Memo read by the Rev. Holly Baylies dressed like a British magistrate — a recitation of Frost's "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening," songs such as "Christmas in the Trenches," and "Twelve Days of Christmas," a funny and well-performed mummer's play, and a rousing rendition of "Lord of the Dance" that concludes with everyone linking hands as they dance and sing around the perimeter of the warm and bright church sanctuary.

Although the songs, readings and musings on the meaning of the holiday are significant, the mummer's play is indeed the thing. Adapted every year according to the news of the day and performed by a troupe of kids and costumed characters such as the fool, Father Christmas and the famous dragon, played Janine Fabiano, that represents something different each year, the play is packed with laugh lines and a host of social and political commentary.

This year the dragon stood for "truthiness," or the word for the truth as the Bush administration tends to see and spin it. Coined by former "Daily Show" correspondent Stephen Colbert on "The Colbert Report," Merriam-Webster recently named it the 2006 "Word of the Year."

Steve Anthony, who plays Father Christmas, adapted the script with some input from Fabiano and other cast members.

Fabiano, who is also the church administrator and a member for almost 15 years, said the celebration has grown in popularity, if not always in numbers, every year since it began. The people who attend are very enthusiastic, she said.

"I love it," said Fabiano. "It's a blast and really fun to be silly."

"It is truly a public event and a universal celebration," said organizer Wendy Dennis, who previously ran the Interfaith Food Pantry and has been a church member along with her family since she was 3. Open to all, she said the larger community outside the membership has shown interest in the event and it has continued to grow in content in popularity.

And while the short days once made people think the sun was not going to return, the modern humanistic celebration has long been a way to bring together people from different faiths to shed the light of laughter, song and dance on the darkest night of the year.