

Client Artwork Brightens Holiday Season at JUMP

In November, a JUMP client created this drawing and left it, unsigned, with a volunteer. She drew it with a blue ballpoint pen on the back of an Imani free food distribution schedule.

- JUMP Donation Wish List**
- Laser jet printer
 - Combo DVD/VCR player (or one of each)
 - Computer tech support volunteer
 - Audit volunteer (bookkeeping, accounting, and church treasurer experience helpful)
- Contact Keri at Keri@jumpvt.org



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Letter from the Board President

As we head into the spring and summer months, many JUMP clients will be facing uncertain economic times. The demand for JUMP services is high. Because jobs have been lost and the period for seasonal work has shortened, JUMP is seeing many new clients, and many former clients are returning to JUMP for the first time in several years.

In the face of such high demand, JUMP's challenge is to maintain and even expand the direct services that it offers, and to do this despite the economic uncertainties faced by many of the JUMP supporting congregations. I am pleased to report that congregational pledging for 2009 is equal to 2008 levels. However, the JUMP board feels that it is necessary to increase other sources of funding, both as insurance against congregational economic uncertainty and as the means to increase direct service spending. One of JUMP's major fundraising efforts is the annual Feinstein & Chittenden Challenge. An ambitious \$20,000 goal has been set; more information is available in another part of this newsletter.

In my capacity as a JUMP weekday volunteer, it is my privilege to be able to spend time talking with JUMP clients and hearing their stories. That's how one learns about how important JUMP can be to someone struggling to get by. JUMP can make a huge difference in a person's life by providing a bus pass or gasoline voucher for transportation to work or to look for work,



Board President Bronwyn Rider

diapers for a baby whose parent has no money to purchase them, a food bag for a family whose food stamps have run out, utility payments that will keep the heat or electricity turned on, or many other vital necessities.

An exciting new resource in Chittenden County is the Housing Resource Center, a collaborative effort of The State Agency of Human Services, COTS, and United Way. Charged primarily with homelessness prevention, the Housing Resource Center is a promising one-stop-shop for those in danger of losing their housing. JUMP is pleased to be participating in the Help Fund, which is being administered through the Housing Resource Center. Through the Help Fund, a variety of agencies, including JUMP and its long-time partnering agencies Joseph's House, Catholic Charities, the Salvation Army, and Chittenden Community Action, are making additional assistance available for homelessness prevention.

Whatever the situation for a specific client, JUMP's mission of providing material assistance, pastoral care, and advocacy continues to be supported by the generosity of its participating congregations and donors, the vendors who accept JUMP vouchers, and the other community organizations with whom JUMP coordinates. JUMP is grateful for all who make its efforts possible.

*Bronwyn Rider
(Christ Church Presbyterian, Burlington)
President of the JUMP Board*

Letter from the Program Director



The Rev. Keri Aubert

I would like to think that I would be compassionate to anyone, anywhere, anytime—but the harsh reality is something different. It may be relatively easy to muster compassion for a person who is readily seen as the innocent victim of circumstance. But for someone who appears to have brought misfortune

upon himself, it becomes more complicated. The well of compassion might not be deep enough or flow fast enough for such a person. And when the well of compassion runs dry, the mud of judgment begins to rise.

While it may be true that I could never be in another person's particular position, I should always be careful about claiming too much credit for creating the security I enjoy in my life. After all, it may have less to do with my personal accomplishments and more to do with my good fortune. Good fortune or bad, the basic trajectory of life for most people is decided by the location of their birth. Like fortune, it is an assignment over which we have no control. And no matter how much good fortune a person has enjoyed, it can turn bad in an instant.

Even if we're relatively independent and secure, each one of us is still a huge bundle of need. I may require more or less help than the next person in order to survive, but the difference

between us pales in comparison to the continuing stream of need—physical, spiritual, and emotional—that runs through each of our lives here on Earth. The ages have shown that very, very few of us are able to survive alone. Our condition can change in an instant and most certainly will change over time. This is a hard truth for most of us.

Judgment can be a very effective tool for distancing ourselves from our discomfort around our own vulnerabilities. But that judgment is also problematic. It has been written that judgment is the biggest block to compassion. Judgment of ourselves and of others blocks our compassion for ourselves and for others.

In the public sphere, it's easy to imagine that we might all be experiencing compassion fatigue right now. If our knee-jerk reaction to a low level of compassion is to disengage, then the better solution is to re-engage: to re-engage with our neighbors by listening to their deepest stories and sharing ours. As we release our judgment, we move toward a compassionate exchange that has the potential to transform not just the parties directly involved but also the entire world.

Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh talks about the emotions we harbor that are worthy of us. To clarify, he's not talking about these emotions as directed by others toward us, but rather as directed by us toward others. For example, he calls us to feel not hatred but rather compassion, even toward those who would harm us. As he puts it, "The only thing worthy of you is compassion—invincible, limitless, unconditional."

*The Rev. Keri Aubert
JUMP Program Director*



UU Food Drive a Huge Success

The folks at First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington created abundance with their November 2008 JUMP food bag drive. They set a record by generously giving over 130 bags of food and over 40 bags of toiletries. Many donors spoke of the need to be generous in these difficult economic times. The drive was led by Martha Dallas, Director of Religious Education, and Ellen Wollensack, a JUMP volunteer.

Lynn Douglas, JUMP Board Vice President, set the tone with stories of her experiences at JUMP. The YUUTH group handed out bags to everyone in the congregation on the first Sunday in November. They also sorted the donated bags to make sure each contained the needed items. The YUUTH and members of Martha's Small Group Ministry moved the 175 bags to JUMP. Thanks to City Market for providing the paper bags and to the anonymous donor who provided cloth bags.



Volunteers from First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington sort through a bounty of food bags for JUMP and smile for the camera when their work is done



Members of First United Methodist Church of Burlington honored Lindy Millington, its JUMP Volunteer Coordinator, on her birthday by donating 155 sticks of deodorant!



In Memoriam

Keith M. Reiner, JUMP volunteer auditor, died on December 28, 2009, at age 51.

Keith was the CFO of the Garrett Hotel Group in Burlington. The people of JUMP are grateful for his generous service to the community and join the many who mourn his passing.



Burlington Interfaith Thanksgiving Service Supports JUMP

The annual Burlington Interfaith Thanksgiving service, sponsored by the Burlington Area Ministers Association, was held November 23 at First Baptist Church of Burlington. JUMP Program Director the Rev. Keri Aubert was the preacher, and JUMP was grateful to receive the offering, which totaled \$650. Other service participants included the Rev. Robert Athas (Dormition Greek Orthodox Church), the Rev. Adrienne Carr (First Congregational Church of Burlington), the Rev. Leroy Dixon (New Alpha Missionary Baptist Church), the Rev. Richard Hibbert (First United Methodist Church of Burlington), the Hon. Madeleine Kunin (former governor of Vermont), and Rabbi David Steinberg (Ohavi Zedek Synagogue).

A highlight of the service was the interfaith choir, which was directed by First Baptist Church Choir Director Dr. Dawn Willis and numbered over sixty participants (including several JUMP volunteers) from over a half-dozen congregations. First Baptist Church instrumentalists, handbell ringers, and organist Dr. Susan Summerfield also participated.

In her message, the Rev. Aubert remarked that all the world's major religions espouse the Golden Rule and believe that the practice of compassion brings followers into the presence of that which we might call God or the Divine. She closed with this: "We give thanks for the well of the Divine, however we know it. We give thanks for the compassion that flows from that well, to us, and through us. We give thanks for those whose lives intersect with ours, those through whom we know compassion, those through whom we know our God."

JUMP Welcomes New Weekday Volunteers

JUMP has recently enjoyed a bumper crop of new weekday volunteers! Weekday volunteers work with the clients who come to the JUMP drop-in center for help. They assist the staffperson of the day with hospitality, referrals, pastoral care, and direct assistance. JUMP could not operate without them. These new JUMP volunteers deserve a heartfelt "Thank you!" for their willingness to give back to our community in this very special and important way.

- Nancy Babbott
Trinity Episcopal Church, Shelburne
- Kathy Babits
First United Methodist Church, Burlington
- Brenda Black
First Congregational Church, Burlington
- Shannon Carstairs
First Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington
- Joyce Darling
First United Methodist Church, Burlington
- Pat Howard
First United Methodist Church, Burlington
- Kathy Mihok
Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, Burlington
- Susie Taylor
First Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington

JUMP
Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
Tuesday, May 12, 2009
Twelve-thirty o'clock
First United Methodist Church
21 Buell Street
Burlington, Vermont



Carol Snow Joins JUMP Staff

In December Carol Snow became the newest member of the JUMP staff. Carol is currently completing her fourth unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Fletcher Allen Health Care. She previously worked at Dismas House of Vermont. She is a member of Charlotte Congregational Church and also practices at the Vermont Zen Center. Interfaith ministry appeals to Carol, and her work incorporates her experiences with Christianity and Buddhism.

As a Program Coordinator, Carol will work two mornings per week at the JUMP drop-in center. Continuing staff members the Rev. Bill Neil, Program Coordinator, and the Rev. Keri Aubert, Program Director, will also each work two mornings per week. With Carol's hire, Keri's responsibilities in such areas as operations, communications, and grants have been expanded.

Carol sees the volunteers, board members, and participating churches as the driving force behind the success of JUMP and has been impressed by the perseverance they exhibit. Carol was drawn to the way that small groups manage the work at JUMP and is convinced that the volunteers make the process work through what she sees as an active demonstration of their faith. "The compassion and respect the volunteers have for the clients who come to JUMP is profound," Carol states. She believes that JUMP clients sense the compassion and respect they receive. Placing this in her Christian context, Carol believes this perspective toward those in need reflects the most basic premise of Christianity.



Program Coordinator Carol Snow

Carol's previous employment at Dismas prepared her well for her duties at JUMP. Dismas is a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting formerly incarcerated individuals with their transition into the community. A residential program, Dismas provides support, housing, and meals. Residents benefit from the small-group atmosphere as well as the participation of numerous volunteers. The concept of "bringing people to the table" is critical; volunteers from the community provide meals to, and share the table with, residents.

Over the past eight years, Carol has worked intermittently as a chaplain at Fletcher Allen Health Care. She has found many similarities between those she ministers to at the hospital and those at Dismas House. She has personally witnessed the profound impact that face-to-face contact and group work can have on people living at the margins.

Carol has studied at the University of Vermont (B.S in Education and M.S. in Counseling and Student Personnel Services), St. Michael's College (M.A. in Theology and Pastoral Ministry), and Andover Newton Theological School. She was born in Brattleboro, Vermont. She and her husband have four grown sons. The family lived in England for ten years before returning to Vermont fifteen years ago.

We gratefully welcome Carol to her new ministry at JUMP!

Nancy Danforth
(First Baptist Church, Burlington)
JUMP Communications Committee Member

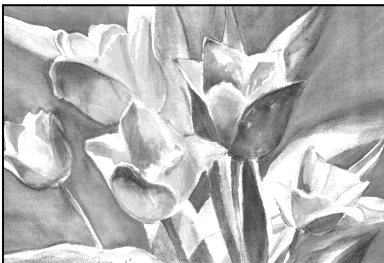


JUMP Receives SCHIP Grant

JUMP is pleased to report that Shelburne Charlotte Hinesburg Interfaith Projects (SCHIP) has awarded JUMP a \$2000 grant to help with direct assistance for persons living in those towns. A cooperative effort of ten faith communities, SCHIP operates a resale shop located on Shelburne Road in Shelburne and grants the proceeds to nonprofit organizations that benefit its communities. JUMP is grateful to SCHIP and to all who support SCHIP through donations of time and goods.

JUMP Holiday Fundraising Success

A big "thank you" to all who supported JUMP during the Holiday season through alternative giving or by buying or selling JUMP notecards and canvas tote bags (which featured the image below). Our sales efforts were a great success. We have some cards and a few bags left. To purchase them, contact Beth Dreibelbis at edreib2@comcast.net.



Save the Date: *Run for the O.N.E. to Benefit JUMP*

The next *Run for the O.N.E. to Benefit JUMP* will be held Saturday, September 26, 2009. Last year's event raised \$7,000 for JUMP, and this year we hope to do even better. Runners and walkers are welcome. Registration will soon be posted on the JUMP website (www.jumpvt.org).



JUMP volunteers (and enthusiastic walkers!) Lucy Samara, Ann Owen, and Barbara Stearns at last year's *Run for the O.N.E. to Benefit JUMP*

VOLUNTEER AT JUMP!

To explore volunteer opportunities at JUMP, please contact Keri Aubert at Keri@jumpvt.org.



It's Feinstein Challenge Time!

Each year, JUMP participates in the Feinstein & Chittenden Challenge, which has become JUMP's largest fundraiser. The Feinstein Foundation offers one million dollars in matching funds to be shared among anti-hunger agencies nationwide. By participating in the Feinstein Challenge, JUMP will receive a modest match on all monetary donations received from March 1 to April 30, 2009. **In addition, the first \$3500 in donations will be matched dollar-for-dollar by a group of local donors.**

Your cash donations allow JUMP to help clients with basic needs such as food, Laundromat use, transportation, medications, identification, and utilities. JUMP also accepts donations of personal and household necessities that are passed on to JUMP clients. During 2008 JUMP was open 242 days and assisted approximately 1400 adults who made a total of 2900 visits. These adults represented 2300 additional family members, including 1500 children.

With the recent downturn in the economy, the needs of our neighbors continue to grow, and JUMP needs your help to respond. **Our Feinstein & Chittenden Challenge goal this year is \$20,000.** This is an ambitious \$6,000 increase over last year's goal. The more you give, the more matching money JUMP receives. Please help by getting your tax-deductible donation in by April 30, 2009. You may use the enclosed envelope and send your donation directly to JUMP or to your congregation, marking your donation for JUMP and the Feinstein & Chittenden Challenge. Your generous gift will be greatly appreciated.

Beth Dreibelbis
(Ascension Lutheran Church, South Burlington)
JUMP Board Member, Committee Chair,
and Daily Volunteer



Congregations Keep JUMP Cupboards Stocked

On days when the JUMP cupboards are full, grateful clients leave not only with vouchers for things such as groceries or transportation but also with one or more bags of food, toiletries, household items, and baby care items.

JUMP depends on its supporting congregations to keep its cupboards stocked with these basic necessities, and the congregations come through in a big way. In 2008, the total value of goods donated by congregations was nearly \$50,000! Believe it or not, despite such generous giving, JUMP still runs out of these items. So please keep them coming!

Toiletries:

- Adult diapers
- Bar soap
- Deodorant
- Feminine napkins
- Razors
- Shampoo
- Shaving cream
- Tampons
- Toilet paper
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste

Household items:

- Dish detergent
- Household cleaner
- Laundry detergent

Baby items:

- Baby food
- Baby formula
- Diapers (sizes 3, 4, and 5)