

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
July 2021
Bulletin Board



- Sun., July 4 Service: *Devil As Trickster: Declaring our Independence from Victimhood*, Rev. Jeanne Montclair
- Sun., July 11 Sharing Circle: *Waiting* (via email)
- Sun., July 18 Service: *Great or Mostly Good Apes*
Rev. Gary Kowalski
- Wed., July 21 Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.
- Sun., July 25 Sharing Circle: *Waiting* (on Zoom)

On My Mind
Rev. Gary Kowalski

Some people grow mellow with age, like a fine vintage. Others are like an uncorked bottle of champagne and just lose their fizz. Some seem to grow younger—more spontaneous, trusting and childlike—with the passing years. Others just get more infantile, cranky and short-tempered. I am beginning to suspect that I am one of the latter.

There's no doubt that age changes us, for better or worse. I recently opened a random page to a Roz Chast cartoon from the encyclopedic volume that's always handy in our bathroom. The drawing shows a larger-than-life-size statue of a bald-headed guy, thick around the middle in a baggy suit, standing atop a marble plinth. It's a memorial. The inscription reads "Fred Philpot, Born 1944. Let It All Hang Out 1967-1979. Stuffed It All Back In 1980-2007." I'm afraid that could be my epitaph.

Call me crotchety but I miss card catalogs. I like Wite-Out. I'm not happy when Google introduces a new widget. I get my TV from an antenna up on the roof and like to hang out my wet clothes on the line to dry. Conservative describes my investing style. I'm a slide-rule kind of guy in a graphing calculator world.

Fortunately, my wife is the same way, but more so. She buys clothes from the used store. She saves buttons. Her favorite novels are from the nineteenth century, and she doesn't mind reading them again and again. Once is not enough.

Maybe there's a support group for people like me. Just don't make me share affirmations or close my eyes or visualize one perfect day. On my perfect day, I'd probably gain ten pounds, and then it wouldn't be perfect anymore.

I know it's better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. But after sixty-seven years, haven't I earned the right to complain? Sometimes I think the universe could use a change of management. It's one change I could welcome.

—Gary

Devil As Trickster: Declaring Our Independence From Victimhood
Rev. Jeanne Montclair
Sunday, July 4

"The Trickster is always found at the threshold," says Lewis Hyde in his book *Trickster Makes This World*. A threshold, as in the threshold between an old-world paradigm and a new one, as in an old sense of self and one which we could scarcely imagine to be possible. The idea of self-as-victim is endemic in our society—so much so that we hardly notice it exists—but anger, discontent, and feelings of powerlessness point to this reality, or, as Byron Katie says, our argument with reality. The cultural, and familial myths we were brought up with can reinforce feelings of vulnerability living in what has often been defined as an out-of-control, threatening doomsday world.

As unpredictable as the world may be, are we victims to it, or to our thoughts and beliefs about it? How have we participated in our victimhood? We only need to look as far as to where we have given our power away—to whom or what. Let us stand strong in our values and collectively "Take back from the devil everything that he stole," or that we gave away for free because we didn't realize we had a choice. Yes, we may have been tricked by our society's values and repetitive mind- and heart-numbing messages, yet there are valuable lessons here—and transformation too—waiting just a few steps away.

See your weekly email for the Zoom link.



Great or Mostly Good Apes

Rev. Gary Kowalski

Sunday, July 18

Established in 1973 by financier John Templeton, the award that bears his name is now known as the Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities, carrying the largest monetary honorarium in the world. The 2021 Templeton Prize Winner is primatologist Jane Goodall, whose groundbreaking insights into the social and emotional worlds of chimpanzees did as much as Darwin to change the human understanding of our own place in nature. This morning Gary offers an appreciation of Dr. Goodall's spiritual and scientific journey as a model for a new religious paradigm.

See your weekly email for the Zoom link.

SHARING CIRCLES

Waiting

Sunday, July 11 & 25, 11 a.m.

The theme of the July Circle will be "Waiting." The topic demanded attention when this question kept coming up: "So what are you waiting for?" And Gary's opening remarks for his address about the Beat Generation included the lovely poem "I Am Waiting," by Lawrence Ferlinghetti. Then Jeanne Montclair in her recent address asked the question: "When is enough?"

We do lots of waiting in our lifetimes—sometimes as pedestrian as standing in a checkout line, or as deeply important as waiting for a dream to come true. But when should we draw the line, if ever? When does waiting become enough or too much? It seems we shouldn't wait much longer to confront this topic of WAITING.

Email sharing will be on July 11, and a Zoom session follow-up will be from 11 a.m. to noon on July 25. For information on how to join if you are not already on the Sharing Circle mailing list, contact Dennis Scott at bridge4fun@mac.com.

UCOT Men's Group

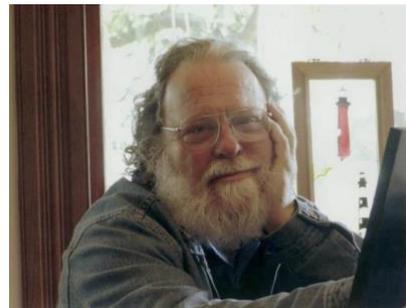
July 21

The UU Men's Group will meet Wednesday, July 21, at 4:30 p.m. All who are fully vaccinated are invited to meet in person. Those who wish can join by Zoom. Contact Dennis Scott at bridge4fun@mac.com for a Zoom invitation.



Music Committee News

Gael Minton



Peter Schickele, b. July 17, 1935 (86 this year)

This month I chose to highlight Peter Schickele. His classical music programs on NPR—favorites of ours from 1970-2000—ran from 1965-2015 with the title *P.D.Q. Bach*, which is the fictional 21st of Bach's 20 children (1742-1807).

Schickele was born in Ames, Iowa, to Alsatian immigrant parents, and brought up in Washington, D.C., and Fargo, North Dakota, where he studied composition with Sigvald Thompson. Graduating from Fargo Central High in 1952, then graduating with a degree in music from Swarthmore College in 1957, he was the first student at Swarthmore—and the only student in his class—with such a degree. He graduated from the Juilliard School with an M.S. in musical composition. In the ensuing years he has frequently cited Roy Harris as the most influential of his teachers.

You can see his "shtick" [here](#), a classic Schickele appearance on the Johnny Carson show in 1987. Also, [this 1984 film](#), *The Abduction of Figaro by P.D.Q. Bach (1807-1742)?* And [in this performance](#), even the brilliant Itzak Perlman gets in on the shtick!

Enjoy the smiles and laughter brought forth by this brilliant man!



JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 6 Bob Aubrecht
- 5 Joe Mazza
- 7 Munro Sickafoose
- 21 Barbara Scott
- 22 Nancy Schultz
- 28 Chuck Fawns

The 1619 Project

With the increased awareness of our needs for sustained progress on racial issues in the United States after the events of the past 12 to 18 months, there is a corresponding need to explore American history in ways not possible until recently. One of the most significant efforts is *The New York Times'* "1619 Project." The Project was started in 2019, on the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first slave ship in the Virginia Colony. Developed by Nikole-Hannah Jones with the help of the staff at the *Times*, the purpose of the "1619 Project" was to "reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the very center of the United States' national narrative."

I recommend exploring the "1619 Project" as a means to broaden our understanding of US history. It tells a very different story from the ones we have learned in the past. It is available in two formats: [There is a podcast, "1619,"](#) available on most podcast platforms, and also a transcript of these podcasts available from *The New York Times*.

The Project is worth taking the time and effort to understand how we got here in 2021 and how we can move forward.

—Bob Aubrecht



Health and Safety Alert from Bob Aubrecht

With the arrival of hot and very dry weather in recent days our annual concern about rattlesnakes is underway. They move down from the mountains and uplands in search of water and food. I have seen two juvenile rattlers in our yard in the past week. They often are looking for shaded areas to avoid the heat of the day. In past years, I have discovered a rattler in our garage on two occasions.

If you have family pets, it is important to be alert when they are outside. Most dogs are inquisitive about snakes and can get bitten very easily. We have our two Golden Retrievers treated with a rattlesnake booster each spring. The drug is designed to slow the effects of the venom, so you can get the dog to a vet for immediate treatment.

