

June 2009



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

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Decatur, IL 62526
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Minister:

Rev. John Biedler
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jsbiedler@aol.com

Office Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday evenings 4:30 to
6:30 p.m. at the Fellowship

President:

Heather Stoa

Past President:

Julie Pajer

Vice President:

Tim Rooney

Treasurer:

Mark Sorensen

Secretary:

Mary Lovell

RE Director:

Cassandra Meyen

Board Members at Large:

Jeanne Robertson
Rita Schwake
Judy Thistlethwaite

UUFd Trust Board:

Ken Robertson
Vern Thistlethwaite
Dave Snoeyenbos

Upcoming Services

All Sunday services begin at 10:15 AM.

There is religious education for children and child care for babies.

June 7, 2009 "A Transformed Life" by Rev. John Biedler

Transformation is about change. Says scholar/historian Joseph Campbell, it is about a change in consciousness, a change in outlook, a shift in perspective. I've done a little work in the area of transformation over the years having done everything from Reality Therapy, Parent Effectiveness Training, Transactional Analysis, est, Outward Bound, the Landmark Forum, Lifespring, the Enneagram, and more...I even went so far as to get a masters degree in "Divinity" from a UU seminary. Some might accuse me of being a human potential junkie. I say all of it has strengthened me, and at the same time made me more flexible with life. I'll share in this sermon what I've discovered -- that life is very much about living your transformations.

June 14, 2009, "Thank You For All You Did" by Rev. John Biedler

The simple act of saying Thank You to someone for something they've done can be transformative in and of itself. In this service I will ask members of the congregation to acknowledge those who have contributed to the Fellowship in so many, many ways as a kind of Thank You for all they've done. Whether that be our board officers; our newsletter editor; our R.E. director; our buildings and grounds chair; the foyer renovation committee? Let's take the time to recognize the people here and in the wider community for all they do that makes such a positive difference.

June 21, 2009, No Service—but there is a Church-wide Potluck at the Snoeyenbos'

If you've not been out to Dave and Elizabeth Snoeyenbos' beautiful home on the wooded rolling hills south of the Sangamon River, you're in for a treat. And if you arrive at about 11 o'clock, Dave will be demonstrating his Medieval catapults and his grist mill. There will be horse shoes, volley ball, badminton, and fun for the whole family. The potluck will begin at noon and maps can be found on the foyer credenza.

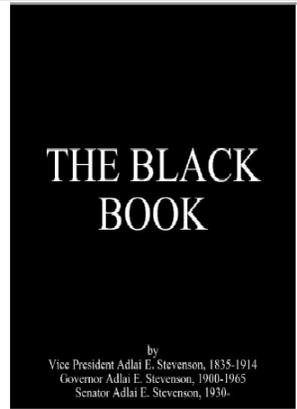
June 28, 2009 "Spiritual Journeys" by Jim Palmer and Deonne Orvis

It's always fascinating listening to someone's process and journey in life. Here they tell where they've come from, why they're where they are, and what they believe at their deepest core. Jim Palmer has been attending UUFd for quite some time and many people have commented that he always has interesting comments to make during the discussion sessions after services. Deonne has been a long time member and has a fascinating history of community involvement and social action work. Come hear their stories in today's service.

Next Newsletter deadline: June 15, 2009

Stevenson book now on sale

Professor Mark Wyman spoke at UUFD last November about Adlai Stevenson II. He recently let us know that the publication of Stevenson stories and quotes, "The Black Book," is now available for purchase at www.adlai3.com for \$29.95.



"The Enneagram, the Way to Gnosis" classes led by Rev. Biedler are for everyone in the community. The last of this six part session will be on Sunday afternoon, June 7th from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. at the Fellowship.

The Enneagram reaches deep into the human psyche and its motivations. If you're seeking a better understanding of yourself and those in you life, whether partners, parents or children, you will enjoy the Enneagram. Even if you've not been to a previous class, feel free to join.

Pledge Campaign

Ten more pledge units are needed for the Fellowship to reach its pledge goal of \$60,000. Please e-mail Mark Sorensen at sorens1@comcast.net with your pledge amount or send in your card to the church. In addition to their current pledge, one family donated 12 new chairs for the RE/Meeting area of the building. Thanks anonymous!

Class on UU and the Fellowship

Rev. Biedler will hold a class for those new to UUFD as an opportunity to get better acquainted with not only the history of the Fellowship, but a history of Unitarian Universalism. The class will be on Sunday afternoon, June 14th, from 1:30 to 3:30 in the Sanctuary. Please sign up on the foyer credenza if interested and pick up your free copy of the book "Our Chosen Faith."

Rev. Biedler's Hours

Since Rev. Biedler is attending the minister's conference at the General Assembly of the UUA in Salt Lake City, UT, his office hours will be Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. on June 2, 4, 9, 11 and 16th. You may reach John at (217) 972-2184 or by leaving a message at the church office at (217) 875-5442. John makes himself available at other times by appointment and welcomes your calls.

Religious Education Classes

Sunday the 7th
 Sunday the 14th
 Sunday the 21st
 Sunday the 28th

June 2009 Calendar of Events

All activities take place at the Fellowship, unless otherwise noted.

Visitors are always welcome!

Tuesday, June 2nd

- 5:00 p.m. — Youth Science Group
- 7:00 p.m. — Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group

Wednesday, June 3rd

- 10:00 a.m. — Wednesday Morn Covenant Group
- 7:00 p.m. — Humanism

Thursday, June 4th

- 4:30 p.m.— Christian Practices Covenant Group

Tuesday, June 9th

- 5:00 p.m. — Youth Community Group
- 7:00 p.m.—decREADgrp

Wednesday, June 10th

- 6:00 p.m. — Women's Book Club

Thursday, June 11th

- 7:00 p.m. — Buddhist Group

Tuesday, June 16th

- 5:00 p.m. — Youth Science Group
- 7:00 p.m. — Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group

Wednesday, June 17th

- 10:00 a.m.—Wednesday Morn Covenant Group

Tuesday, June 23rd

- 5:00 p.m. — Youth Community Group
- 7:00 p.m.—decREADgrp

Thursday, June 25th

- 7:00 p.m. — Buddhist Group

Group discussion topics:

Buddhist Group—The UUFD Buddhist Group will be meeting at Terry Ankrom's house, 2480 West Main Street, Decatur, Illinois, 62522 on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Further information? Call 217-428-1807 E-mail terryankrom@gmail.com

Youth Group—Youth Group meetings are every Tuesday from 5-6 pm at the UUFD. The 1st and 3rd Tuesdays are Science Group, and the 2nd and 4th are Community Group. All ages are welcome. For more information email Cassandra at meyen@peoplepc.com

Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group—The Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7 pm in the Fellowship sanctuary. This month we will meet June 2nd and 16th. The discussion group seeks to explore the teachings and spiritual philosophy of Eckhart Tolle, a contemporary mystic, through discussions, audio-visual presentations, and silent meditations. Presently we are viewing and discussing a spiritual retreat with Eckhart Tolle filmed in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2004 and entitled "The Art of Presence." All are welcome and no prior knowledge of Tolle's teachings is required. Contact Mel Weinstein (763-0509) for additional information.

The Christian Practices Covenant Group—The Christian Practices Covenant Group will meet on Wednesday, June 4th, Discussions center on the life and teachings of Jesus, with the current reading "Jesus for the Non Religious" by Episcopal Bishop John Spong. Please join.

The Wednesday Morning Covenant Group—The Wednesday Morning Covenant Group meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month, June 3 and 17, from 10 a.m. to noon. The group is reading and discussing the very interesting book "Living Buddha, Living Christ" by Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh. We welcome guests, setting out an empty chair each time.

Humanist Group—The Humanist group meets the first Wednesday of each month. All meetings begin at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur at 7:00 p.m.

Women's Book Club—The Women's book club will meet Wednesday, June 10 at 6 at the home of Sharon Zimmerman. The book is Moloka'I by Alan Brennert. Please bring a dish to share.

Letters from John...

There was a cartoon a few years ago of a little boy sitting with his Dad in church as the minister gave a sermon. The little boy turned to his Dad and whispered, "Why can't YOU get a job where you only have to work one day a week?"

Some may wonder what I or any minister does during the rest of any given week...well, here goes, a synopsis of "a week in the life of John Biedler."

My first thought in this regard is that any time I'm out and about in the city of Decatur, I'm aware that at all times I represent the face of Unitarian Universalism to this community. Not the only face of course, but a face nevertheless. And so it is for all of you. If anyone finds out you or I go to the UU church of Decatur, they are going to judge the church by what they see and hear in us. It's inevitable.

Knowing this keeps me conscious of how I interact with people, whether it's attending a meeting such as the ecumenical minister's gathering with local clergy; or attending School Superintendent Gloria Davis' monthly "One Voice" luncheon for Decatur ministers; whether I'm working with volunteers at the MAX Program from congregations throughout Decatur, or whether simply talking with a clerk at the grocery store. Every time is an opportunity for you and me to be "the face and voice of UUism" in our community.

May of this year I completed a two year position as chair of the board of the Youth Advocate Program, a non-profit organization with a million dollar budget that works with the Dept. of Human Service and a dozen other state and federal agencies helping families and children stay together when tough times happen.

And since I am director of Dove's MAX Program on a part-time basis, I deal with many of the social service organizations throughout the city. In that capacity, I have the opportunity to speak before organizations such as Kiwanis, Lion's Clubs, Rotary Clubs, and other philanthropic organizations that send money in support of Dove. Wherever I go and whenever I speak, people know I am the minister of the UU Fellowship of Decatur and that what I do for Dove is a direct outreach of that congregation.

Because of my association with Dove, an opportunity came my way this past April to be master of ceremonies at a community breakfast hosting candidates for mayor, city council and other elected officials within Macon County.

Whenever I'm on the WSOY radio program "Direct Line" hosted by Wayne Kent, or when I appear on Bill Faber's cable TV show "The Faber Files," I'm there as the face and voice of Unitarian Universalism in our community. And though opportunities come my way that afford me a kind of higher visibility within our community, so too, in subtle and significant ways, do each of you represent UUism in Decatur.

Whenever any of us visits a member of the congregation in the hospital or nursing home, or have lunch or coffee together after a Covenant Group, or simply attend a committee meeting at the Fellowship, these are those more casual settings that still ask of us to BE what Unitarian Universalism stands for, to represent our seven principles in the world.

So whether it's before or after Sunday services, or at a potluck at church or in someone's home, or even attending a first Friday Arts Council gathering downtown, these are all moments of impression, times when people can see, hear and feel what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist.

It's my privilege to be able to have contact with all of you throughout the week. As current chair of the Program & Worship Committee, it affords me even more interaction with many of you as I line up speakers for our Sunday services.

So what does a minister do the rest of the week? Well, we write sermons, we author columns for the newsletter, we think and meditate a lot, we do final editings of newsletters, we conduct office hours, go to committee meetings, talk with people, think some more, participate in Covenant Groups, meet with ministerial colleagues ecumenically and denominationally, and, well, anything else that will help promote and expand the presence of our congregation and our principles.

Letters from John... (Continued)

So to the little boy in the cartoon who sees the minister working only on Sundays, well, I would say come ride along side just about any minister I know for a week. Then he might say, "Dad, I think you better keep the job you have...at least you're home in the evening."

In your service,

John

Themes for the Calendar Year

During the church year (September-June), Rev. Biedler fashions his sermons around specific themes and ideas. These themes provide a set of common stories and concepts for an ongoing community conversation among members and friends of the Fellowship. Rev. Biedler supports these themes with newsletter articles, handouts of suggested reading and spiritual practices. With guest speakers each month as well, you will find that there are many varied topics covered in any given month. Each Sunday a discussion with the minister or guest speaker takes place after the service to which all are invited. The themes of Rev. Biedler's sermons for 2008-2009 are:

September -- Vision	February -- Authority
October -- Creation	March -- Redemption
November -- Democracy	April -- Freedom
December -- God	May -- Mercy
January -- Evil	June -- Transformation

General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

June Allison & Chelso Frescura are taking the Amtrak train to this years annual Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly (GA) in Salt Lake City, UT. Each year the event is 5 days long in the month of June and ends the final Sunday of the month = June 24-28, 2009. This year our nationwide delegates will vote on a new president of the UUA as our current President Bill Sinkford steps down from office. June and Chelso will be delegates at the assembly and we invite UUFD members to give us your input into voting while we are there. This is the event where nationwide UUA changes are created and happen. Go to www.uua.org to read about this process and find out the current issues and activities of this years plenary sessions.

What's that string around my finger?!?!

Wondering why that string is tied around your finger? It is time to send in your pledge for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. If you have not done so, please send your pledge to Treasurer Mark Sorensen or drop off your pledge card at the Fellowship. We passed a \$7,800 deficit budget at the Annual Meeting and have agreed to revisit the budget in July if pledges do not get us closer to meeting the \$74,000 in projected expenses. We need everyone's support and ask each of you to help the Fellowship with your financial contribution.

How to Prepare for the Swine Flu (and Other Health Crises)

By now, we've heard plenty of news about the most recent global pandemic, Swine flu. If you would like to know more, and be proactive about it, we would like to provide you with the following information:

http://pediatrics.about.com/od/swineflu/l/bl_swine_flu_map.htm

Dr. Michael Greger, Director of Public Health and Animal Agriculture at The Humane Society of the United States is an internationally recognized lecturer, he has presented at the Conference on World Affairs, the National Institutes of Health, and the International Bird Flu Summit, among countless other symposia and institutions, and was invited as an expert witness in defense of Oprah Winfrey at the infamous "meat defamation" trial. He is a graduate of the Cornell University School of Agriculture and the Tufts University School of Medicine and written several books, one of which is an e:book "A Virus of our Own Hatching" and is downloadable for FREE at:

<http://birdflubook.com/g.php?id=5>

<http://videos.med.wisc.edu/videoInfo.php?videoid=241>

This is an online lecture that was recently presented at the Fellowship, since he was not able to be with us in person. It is not to be missed! It's just under an hour long and very informative. It'll show you how the viruses came to be in human beings in the first place, and what we can do to stop their proliferation. It's a very simple solution! But will we DO it?! This is now our challenge.

Here are more links to more of his information and to other sites.

http://www.freerangethought.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=148&Itemid=40

http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_17882.cfm

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/the-swine-flu/stop-spread-of-swine-flu-at-home.aspx>

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/publicsite/news/view.aspx?id=626829>

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/publicsite/news/view.aspx?id=626778>

http://www.naturalnews.com/the_flu.html

Let's all be safe!

The UUFDF Green Sanctuary Committee

From the President...

Greetings Members and Friends of UUFD,

As the 2008-2009 fiscal year comes to an end and the officers, board members and committee chairs begin their new positions, it is a time for reflection and forward thinking. First let me begin by thanking Julie Pajer for her work as president this past year; thank you to our outgoing board members Linda Shroyer and Dave Snoeyenbos for their service; thank you to John Biedler for another year of ministry; and thank you to all who served as officers, board members, trustees, and committee chairs for their leadership.

For all who worked on the committees; helped with the fundraisers; served coffee and brought treats; made popcorn; greeted newcomers and friends; placed hymnals on the chairs and returned them to the cabinet after the service; ran off announcements; made sure that we had candles and wicks each week; participated in the discussions following the service; called your list on the phone tree; planned Earthstock, Family A-Fair, and the Environmental Film Series; met with the architect; lined up speakers, programs and musicians; taught an RE class; shared your time with our children; cleaned and painted classrooms; spread mulch, raked and pulled weeds; changed light bulbs; installed new toilets; cleaned out the attic; organized the storage spaces; edited the newsletter; worked on the Web site; donated food to the NE Community Fund; prepared and served meals at the Good Samaritan Inn; visited and helped friends and members who were ill or grieving; selected colors and furnishings for the foyer; updated the sign; collected offerings and made deposits; ran the sound system; acted as service leader, sang or played music, attended GA, or invited a friend to join you on Sunday morning, you deserve a big pat on the back. Whew – we may be a small congregation, but we accomplish much! Without each of you the Fellowship would not be the caring and open place where each of us can express our beliefs as we determine our own spiritual path. The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur nurtures us and encourages us to make our community and the world a better place. I recently watched a documentary on Malawi and was struck by a phrase that they used to show the role of each individual as a part of a group: “I am, because we are”. I like the interdependence of that statement, and how it defines the mutuality of our roles as individuals and as a part of the Fellowship. I thank each of you for your contributions to the Fellowship and the community and want you to know that your contributions do not go unnoticed.

As president, I want to share a few of my goals for the upcoming year, but first let me begin with a quote from A.A. Milne, the wonderful author who brought us Winnie the Pooh. I don't know if Owl said this to Pooh, but to me, it is certainly a wise saying, “Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it is not all mixed up.” To that end, the Long Range Planning Committee reviewed and recommended changes to our Constitution to provide us with better organization and a clearer definition of who we are and what we are about. You will find the updated Constitution on our Web site in the Members Section along with the Organizational Manual. The Organizational Manual is fluid and a work in progress. As each committee goes through the year, please let me know what works and what doesn't.

Through the newsletter and the newly revamped Web site: www.uufd.org, I hope to improve communications between members and friends and with the community at large. Check the calendar on the Web site to find out what activities are available at the Fellowship each week. In that same vein of better communication, committee chairs will be meeting with the board for the first board meeting of each quarter so that we are all aware of what others are thinking, planning and doing. I am asking John Biedler, the board members and committee chairs to send reports to me and to the board members prior to each board meeting so that our meeting time can be devoted to policy issues and future plans. Board and committee minutes are posted on our Web site in the Members Section.

A major area of concern for me deals with our bookkeeping practices. We are working with an accountant to make sure that we comply with the law and several of us are learning to use Power Church, an on-line accounting software program, that will help us track income and expenses more efficiently than we have in the past.

From the President (continued)...

The board recently decided to focus on only one fundraiser for the year. Books, Bites & Botanicals is scheduled for October 10th, and Judy Thistlethwaite has agreed to serve as general chair. We need help and support from everyone at UUFd to make this a successful fundraiser. Save the date and let Judy know how you are able to assist with BB&B.

There are two committees where we need an infusion of people and ideas. Those are Programs and Religious Education. If you are willing to serve as chair or co-chair or to help on either committee, please let me know. A key to retaining and attracting new members is strong Sunday morning programs including an active RE program. A key to attracting younger members is a good religious education program. Our Fellowship must be a place where both children and adults feel their needs are being met.

Although we have a large and active Membership/Outreach Committee, membership is a responsibility that belongs to each of us. Later this year, we will have a guest UU minister help us focus on strategies for growth. We should be aware that growth means change, and we must be ready for the changes that growth brings.

For any who have been a part of the Fellowship for any length of time, the goals will be familiar. We are always looking for new members, we are always in need of more money, we are always hoping to improve communication, and we are always seeking to improve the functioning of our committees and board. Our goals are good goals, but I hope that we are never satisfied with the outcomes. The day-to-day activities of the Fellowship bind us together, but it is our actions and ongoing support financially and with our time and talents that keep us together and attract others to share in our liberal religious tradition.

Please contact me as we travel through this year together with ideas, suggestions and concerns for the betterment of the Fellowship. I look forward to working together and getting to know each of you better. Thank you for your confidence and support.

In Service,
Heather Stoa

Highlights of the UUFd 2009 Environmental Film Series

As all of you know, the Green Sanctuary Committee hosted the second annual Environmental Film Series during late winter and early spring. Of course, how can you not know with all the publicity we did this year? We were fortunate to have the assistance of Donna Cruce, a volunteer event promoter who used to publicize the Theater 7 plays. As a result, June Allison, showed up on television and radio, sometimes waking up in the wee early hours of the morning to appear on a media program.

This year we showed 6 films with several double-feature nights. It's not easy getting people to spend their Saturday evenings watching documentaries, but we had a pretty good bunch films ranging from social commentary (Affluenza, Everything's Cool) to our conflict with nature (Wolves in Paradise) to the impacts of civilization on the environment (Return of Cuyahoga, King Corn) to some history (Audubon). It was a fun, educational and interesting series.

How did we do this year? The total attendance for 4 movie nights was about 127. The proceeds from the sales of popcorn and drinks plus donations was \$367 in addition to funds received from our sponsors, the Audubon Society of Decatur and the Community Environmental Council. After expenses were paid, we netted about \$328 for future Green Sanctuary projects. Special thanks are due to Gwen Biedler, Joan Brown, Marge Evans, June Allison, Jeane Robertson, and Rita Schwake. Finally, thanks to the Fellowship members and friends who came out to support the film series this year.

Grow Biointensive Gardens

Do you support the concept of Community Supported Agriculture but can't afford the membership?

Do you enjoy the flavor and freshness of locally grown vegetables?

Are you concerned about your family's health?

Are you caring for elders who would benefit from more fresh vegetables and raw juices in their diet?

Could you use some additional income from growing salad subscriptions for your neighbors, or selling produce at Farmer's Market?

Would you like to incorporate more food plants into your property's landscape design?

If you answered "yes" to any of these suggestions, you may enjoy learning how to "Grow Biointensive." In Europe it is called "Lazy Bed" gardening. (After deep beds are established, they require very little additional labor.) Specialties include the following: deep bed preparation; intensive plant spacing; use of compost; all organize methods practices—no chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides. It uses one half the water and one percent of the energy consumed by commercial agriculture.

The class will meet eight weeks from June 8th through July 27th at the Fellowship on Monday evenings from 7:00 to 8:15. Registration is \$20, and there will be a choice of three text books: Jeavons How to Grow More Vegetables; Coleman The New Organize Gardener; and Lanza Lasagna Gardening.

Sessions will be as follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Overview of the Course
Resources and Expectations
History of Agriculture (brief!) | 2. Garden as Ecosystem
Soil
Composting
Slide show of Resident Decomposers |
| 3. History and Practice of Biointensive
Raised Planting Beds
Multiple Cropping | 4. Seed Starting
Companion Planting
Weeds
Herbs |
| 5. Working with the Moon | 6. Love Your Bugs
Insect Balance |
| 7. Food Plants in the Home Landscape | 8. Share Your Vision
Individual Plot Plans
Show and Tell |

To register, check in at the display in the friendship area, or call Deonne Orvis at 615-4618.

Meet Deonne Orvis

Deonne Orvis is a qualified Conservation Educator under New York State Civil Service and holds a certificate in landscape Design from the National Career Institute in Los Angeles. She first taught Biodynamic French Intensive gardening from the family home in Burnt Hills, New York in 1969—from a typed and stapled copy of the first Palo Alto Research report. Now, 40 some years of vegetable gardening later, the method is practiced nationwide and in 110 countries around the world. Deonne has previously taught the course at Union College, Schenectady; Richland Community College, Decatur; Lincolnland and UIS, Springfield. "The current economic situation is a great motivation for people to take control of their own food supply!"



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

June 2009 Issue

"Promoting freedom, reason,
And tolerance in religion"

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Fellowship mission statement:

In a nurturing environment of openness, mutual respect, and friendship, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur is a welcoming, diverse congregation. We share values and seek to celebrate life and support one another in our inward and outward searches for spiritual meaning, provide a liberal religious presence, and strive for compassion and justice in our community and our world.



June Birthdays

Adam Vaught, June 20



June Allison, June 29



Joan Brown, June 30



For

Contact

At:

Name Tags

Kathy Kline

kkline923@aol.com

Address Changes

Tim Rooney

uufdnewsletter@gmail.com

Newsletter submissions

Tim Rooney

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Website suggestions

June Allison

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JUNE 2009 ISSUE