

Reflections

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

DAVIE, FLORIDA

SUMMER 2017

MID-SUMMER MIRACLES

Rev. Amy Carol Webb



Your minister is on Summer break. But then, what is a Summer break anyway? Is there a break from the flow of life? A break from the constant stream of learning, growing, deepening engagement with ourselves, one another, earth? A break from the miracles around us every moment? No, none of these stop. Ever. No matter what your flow of life, your learning, your growing, or your definition of “miracle” might or might not be.



Sunset over the River of Grass, NPS photo, G. Gardner

So this mid-Summer, let us take a moment from our Summer adventures, of body or spirit, for reminder from the pages of our forefather, the beloved poet Walt Whitman. Me? I’m with Walt; I know of nothing else but miracles.

Miracles – Walt Whitman, 1819-1892

Why, who makes much of a miracle?

As to me I know of nothing else but miracles,

Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,

Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,

Or wade with naked feet along the beach just in the edge of the water,

Or stand under trees in the woods,

Or talk by day with any one I love, or sleep in the bed at night with any one I love,

Or sit at table at dinner with the rest,

Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,

Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive of a summer forenoon,

Or animals feeding in the fields,

Or birds, or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,

Or the wonderfulness of the sundown, or of stars

shining so quiet and bright,

*Or the exquisite delicate thin curve
of the new moon in spring;*

*These with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles,
The whole referring, yet each distinct and in its place.*

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,

Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,

*Every square yard of the surface of the earth
is spread with the same,*

Every foot of the interior swarms with the same.

To me the sea is a continual miracle,

*The fishes that swim—the rocks—the motion of the waves—the ships with men in them,
What stranger miracles are there?*

IN THIS ISSUE

Stay Connected!	2
Board President	3
Worship Services	3
Choir	4
Auction	4
Faith Development	5
Hollywood Street Signs	5
Getting to Know UU's	6
River of Grass Café	7
fUUndraising	7
UUWomenspirit	8
Postal Food Drive 2017	9
Money Matters	10
Financial Matters	10
Hospitality Teams	10
Covenant Groups	11
UU Justice Florida	11
Chip in for Chairs	12

OUR SUNDAY LOCATION

11850 W. State Road 84, Suite 1, Davie, FL 33325

EVERY SUNDAY

Worship Service: 10:30 to 11:30 am. **Hospitality Hour:** 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.
Faith Development Classes: 11:00 am to 12:00 noon

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

There is plenty of parking outside the sanctuary, but please leave the closer parking spaces for our guests and physically challenged worshippers.

All meetings are held at 11850 W State Road 84, Suite 1 in Davie unless otherwise noted.



River of Grass

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OUR PRINCIPLES

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

STAY CONNECTED!

Between issues of *Reflections* you can stay connected to the River of Grass Congregation the following ways:

- ♦ **Sign up for our weekly email** with events and news: send an email to office@riverofgrassuu.org
- ♦ **Visit our Facebook page:** www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu
- ♦ **Follow us on Twitter:** @RiverOfGrassUU or www.twitter.com/riverofgrassuu
- ♦ **Visit our calendar:** www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html (or go to: www.riverofgrassuu.org – click on Events – Calendar)
- ♦ **Join our MeetUp group:** www.meetup.com/riverofgrassuu



AUGUST



FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Zena Tucker



Ever row a boat with several other people? Experience the frustration when the other occupants steer in ways you don't understand? Become alarmed when the boat wobbles (or topples!) when one person leans one way and the rest another? Experienced paddlers know the smoothest, most efficient and fastest way to row a boat is in sync.

This idea is a bit troubling to we independent-thinking Unitarian Universalists. We defend and honor our Fourth Principle: "The free and responsible search for truth and meaning." At first glance, It's easy to conclude that moving in harmony is the same as acquiescing.

Recently, scientists explored the synchronized rowing. <http://physicstoday.scitation.org/doi/10.1063/PT.3.3606>. They noted that aquatic-rowing many-legged creatures such as krill and fishing spiders actually use out-of-sync swimming to reduce fluctuations in speed and friction. Could asynchronous rowing improve human rowboats? The researchers conducted experiment after experiment taking one or more oars at different timing from the others. In each case, when the rowing was out of sync, the mean speed was slower than that of a vessel with paddling all together. Why such a difference between natural creatures and humans in rowboats?

The answer: Unlike the krill, rowers propel the boat forward even during the recovery time. When the paddles are lifted, the rowers move forward inside the boat, providing a forward force to the boat even during this coasting time. Amazingly, while the rowers rest and ready for the next big push of the paddle, they are still propelling the boat forward.

I find this to be a profound idea. Consider our beloved River of Grass and each of us with an oar to do our part. What breathtaking new horizons will we explore? What new bonds will we form as we paddle? And as we glide along this summer and recover, let us realize, we are still a mighty forward-moving force.

Our third principle: "Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations" encourages us. Perhaps syncing with others is not so much acquiescing, but really a beautiful harmonizing.

It was my honor and pleasure to paddle with you as Board President these last two years, and I look forward to rowing in harmony with you on this beautiful River in the coming year.



WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY AT 10:30 AM

August 6	Kip Barkley, <i>Guardians of the Galaxy</i>
August 13	Rita Cherubini & Ann Lewis, <i>TBA</i>
August 20	Ed & Georgette Lewis, <i>The Joy of Travel</i>
August 27	Wendell Abern, <i>The Beauty of Friendship</i>
September 3	Rev. Amy, <i>Welcome/Hospitality</i>

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD! JOIN THE CHOIR!

If you've always wanted to try your hand at being a musical performer, the River of Grass choir is the perfect place to start; more importantly, it's so rewarding to make music that enhances the worship experience! Our friendly atmosphere is welcoming to people of all levels of musical ability, and you don't have to buy an expensive instrument! In fact, it's free!

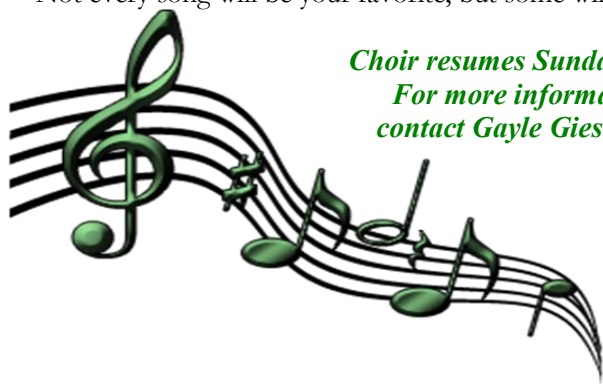
1. Group singing is a community-building activity! Scientists and psychologists say that joining a choir can help you make friends with people faster than joining any other social group. Our choir is a group of friends who love to sing *and* care about each other.

2. You don't need to sing like Andrea Bocelli to have a great time.

There is no audition and no experience required. More people = better sound. You don't need to know how to read music, although it does help. I'll make recordings for you to listen and learn your parts. Over time, your reading ability will improve! The skills of listening and repeating, feeling harmonies, and having an instinct for rhythm are even more important than reading music.

3. Music is stress-relieving. Choir rehearsal will quickly become your favorite part of the week, despite that it's **9-10am on Sunday mornings!** It is an opportunity to escape your daily stresses and responsibility and focus on making something beautiful. It's a liberating feeling to not have the weight of the world on your shoulders, but to instead be part of a whole and doing something worthwhile.

4. We perform all kinds of music. Choral music, especially in UU congregations, encompasses a wide variety of styles and cultures, and singing in a choir is a fantastic opportunity to expose yourself to music you might not normally encounter. Not every song will be your favorite, but some will be truly unforgettable!



*Choir resumes Sunday, 8/20, 9am in the multi-purpose room.
For more information about the River of Grass Choir,
contact Gayle Giese at choirdirector@riverofgrassuu.org*



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, November 4th, is the date!
The River's Annual Auction/Party is the event!

Don't miss it because you didn't put it on your calendar and then scheduled something else. This is ROG's biggest fundraising event for the year – and one of the funest (sorry, grammar police – I mean "most fun").

The auction team is already meeting and planning, so there will be more information coming soon. In the meantime, think about parties you would like to give and those you would like to attend.

Kathy Jens-Rochow
auction@riveroifgrassuu.org

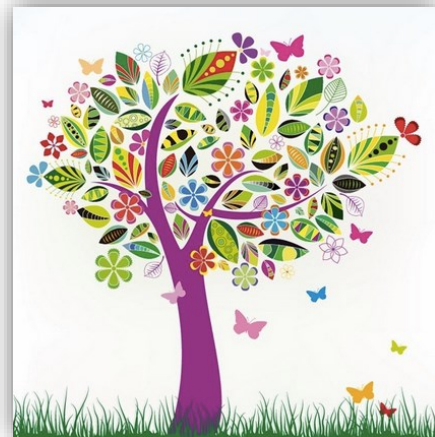


FAITH DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Deborah Ely, Faith Development Coordinator



Happy Summer from Faith Development! We are having a lovely time in Summer Fellowship with volunteers from the congregation. All children are welcome this summer to participate in our Summer Fellowship, where we do crafts, play games and make music, among other things. Thank you to all of our volunteers for sharing their gifts and ideas with the children. It is such a wonderful way for the children to get to know the adults at River of Grass, and the adults enjoy building friendships with the kids as well.



We are now recruiting teachers from the congregation for the upcoming year! The three classes we will have will be Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary. Please see Tanya Gustafson or Debbie Ely to sign up for teaching. In the meantime, I hope your summer is filled with lots of fun, travel, family, friends, and love. See you all soon!

“HOLLYWOOD, TAKE DOWN THE CONFEDERATE STREET SIGNS!”

Steve Jens-Rochow

Protest Hollywood street signs on Wednesday, August 30. Three streets in Hollywood are named after Confederate Generals: Lee, Hood and Forrest. And Nathan Forrest is a founder of the KKK. We will rally in front of Hollywood City Hall at 2600 Hollywood Boulevard with signs, chants and speakers at 12 pm. At about 1 pm we will march inside the commission chamber during their meeting. They are scheduled to take up and vote on their proposed ordinance to re-name the three streets.

Confederate symbols are hate symbols and do not belong on public streets. At the Commission meeting on June 21, 150 protestors peacefully demonstrated and the city Commission agreed to take up the renaming of the three streets.

https://www.facebook.com/NBCMiami/videos/10154845800442582/?sw_fnr_id=3083406976&fnr_t=0

This protest is sponsored by *Black Lives Matter Alliance Broward* and the *Women's March Florida–Broward Chapter*.



Getting to Know UU's

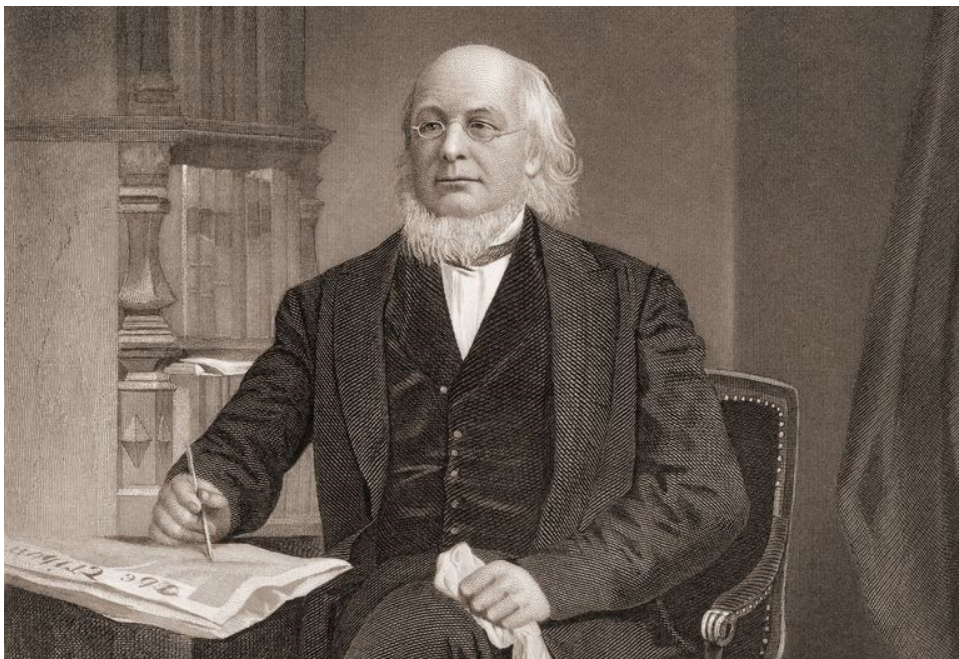
"Getting to Know UU's" is a new monthly feature of the newsletter suggested and written by Kathy Jens-Rochow.

HORACE GREELEY (1811-1872): Founder and editor of the *New York Tribune*; labor and women's rights activist

Horace Greeley was personally offended by the sensationalist newspapers of the period, and worked to make the *New York Tribune* a credible newspaper for the masses. Though the paper was fairly conservative politically, Greeley advanced opinions that deviated from the standard Whig orthodoxy. He supported women's rights and labor, and he opposed monopolies.

He hired early feminist Margaret Fuller (another famous Unitarian) to write for the *Tribune*, making her the first female newspaper columnist in New York City.

He was the candidate for the new Liberal Republican party in the 1872 presidential election against incumbent President Ulysses S. Grant. Greeley died just before the election.



Horace Greeley is generally credited with having coined the often-quoted phrase "Go West, young man." However John B. L. Soule, an Indiana journalist, had written "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country" earlier, in an editorial in the *Terre Haute (Indiana) Express* in 1851. Greeley, later, wrote, "Do not lounge in the cities! There is room and health in the country, away from the crowds of idlers and imbeciles. Go west, before you are fitted for no life but that of the factory."

Sources: *ThoughtCo.com* and *Wikipedia*



RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ: JOIN US SEPTEMBER 16TH FOR OUR OWN AMY CAROL WEBB

Our summer break will be over before you know it, and River of Grass will proudly present Amy Carol Webb as our Cafe opening act on September 16th. Amy Carol Webb is Florida's most beloved treasure. Named one of South Florida's "Ten Best Folk Singers of All Time" in 2013, an "Act to Watch" by Billboard magazine and "One to watch in the next millennium" by the Miami Herald - the sole songwriter among noted philanthropists, activists, and cultural visionaries - Amy Carol Webb is passionate and poignant, the girl next door and no ordinary woman. From her first CD, *Songweaver*, to her most current *Scattered Seeds*, her music is creative, passionate, raucous, contemplative and life-changing!

Doors open at 7pm for food and drink purchases; concert begins at 8pm. Advance tickets available on the ROG website for \$18, or at the door for \$23.00.



...and if you don't know yet, here is the rest of the season!

- ◆ **Greg Greenway** – October 21
- ◆ **emma's revolution** – November 18
- ◆ **Hot Java Band** – January 20
- ◆ **Tret Fure** – February 17
- ◆ **Joe Jencks** – March 17
- ◆ **Peggy Lee Tribute with Mindy Simmons and band** – April 21
- ◆ **David Roth** – May 19

Season tickets will be available until September 15, and include our first annual ROG Cafe t-shirt and cost \$145. Individual tickets are \$23 at the door, and \$18 in advance. The Peggy Lee Tribute will be \$27 at the door and \$22 in advance. Get tickets now at the River of Grass website.

GOLD RUSH AT THE RIVER

There's gold in them thar hills boxes!

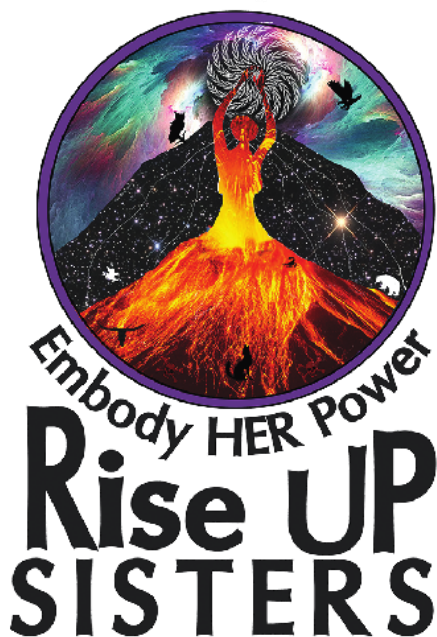
River of Grass is panning for your gold! Dig deep in your jewelry boxes and other places to find those unwanted pieces of gold – like those single earrings (where you lost one and don't want to throw away the other), old rings and things that don't fit (like your wedding ring from your first marriage or your class ring), that "good" but really ugly bracelet your mother-in-law gave you.



Collect them and bring them in on Sunday, September 17. After service, Gary Crain, a licensed metallurgist, will assess your valuables. He will "buy" them from you, donate the value to the River. You get a donation letter for the IRS for your donation to us.

Please sign up in advance (so we know how many people to expect) or for more information, contact Kathy Jens-Rochow at fundraising@riverofgrassuu.org.

UUWomenspirit Fall 2017 Retreat INSTITUTE OCT 11-13 • GATHERING OCT 13-15



Join us! Celebrate! Worship!

Join us this fall as we gather once again in the beautiful setting of The Mountain near Highlands, NC where for 30 years a sacred web of women has assembled to celebrate the power of the Divine Feminine. We will find the courage and strength to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals as we awaken to the gifts we find in the lengthening nights and embrace the lightning in our blood, bringing us to fruition in these times we were born for.

Delving deeply into earth-centered themes of power, we will explore the Goddess through workshops, worships, dancing, drumming, and much, much, more.

Rise Up Sisters!



FOR MORE INFO: UUWOMENSPIRIT.ORG

We are living in uncharted times.

Many feel instability and chaos
are challenging us,
and stretching us to our limit.

Protecting all we love, we find we have
strengths uniquely ours - enabling us to
endure, resist, and transform.

We come to know we are sovereign
to discover and choose
our own paths of power.

We discover the power of the sun, moon,
storms, earthquakes, volcanos,
whose great forces radiate within ourselves,
from the Goddess, from the Sisterhood,
and from the Universe.

In elemental ways, we become these forces -
rocks, flames, water, moon, sky, and stars.

Moving with the planet,
we embody Her wisdom,
Her energy, Her love.

And we create a world where our remarkable
gifts bring healing to ourselves,
rippling beyond us into the greater cosmos.

Rise Up in supportive sisterhood
to birth new beginnings,
plant seeds of change,
and feel connected to the Divine Feminine
and Spirit of all Women.

IMPORTANT DATES

Wed Aug 16: Registration Opens

Wed Sept 13: Early Bird
Deadline

Wed Oct 4: Last day to register



POSTAL FOOD DRIVE MAY 13TH

Judi Oltmans

Thank you to all the River of Grass volunteers who helped out at the annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive on Saturday, May 13th! A special thank you goes out to our shift leaders, Diane Diaz and Zena Tucker! The Letter Carrier's Food Drive brings in thousands of pounds of food for LifeNet4Families every year. This year River of Grass volunteers packed up 5,370 lbs. of food at the Inverrary Postal Branch!

LifeNet4Families CEO Melanie Geddes stopped by to help and to speak to volunteers about LifeNet. Working alongside our River of Grass volunteers were LifeNet4Families Board members Andy Cagnetta, Marty Basson and Robyn Wolfer.

This year ran very smoothly because the donated food only had to be sorted and placed in very large boxes the size of one pallet, so there was no box making and no one had to carry or stack heavy boxes. Thank you again to all our volunteers for making a difference in our community!



MONEY MATTERS

By Kip Barkley, Planned Giving Group



Kip included on our Planned Giving Page at www.RiverOfGrassuu.org/planned-giving.html a link to an online class in Personal Finance by Marnie Aznar through Fairleigh Dickenson University. Kip even watched it, all 12 segments, each only 10 minutes long. These are just the right size for my ADHD mind.

Marnie touches on various related topics, and it was easier than reading a *For Dummies* book. I suspect some people have gaps in their knowledge in some of these areas. Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDWnmocgS2A&list=PL9F79F6DDFBAB7201>, and see if any of this is new to you.

Quoting F. Matthias Alexander, “People don’t decide their futures. People decide their habits, and their habits decide their future.”

FINANCE MATTERS

Pam Schrimsher, Finance Committee Chair

The Finance Committee is meeting Monday, August 7th at 7:30pm. All are welcome. We will be reviewing the past year’s financials, plus beginning our discussion of money as a spiritual medium.



HOSPITALITY TEAMS— COMING SOON TO THE RIVER!

Submitted by Zena Tucker

Let it be a dance! Hospitality teams are a new way to sharing the tasks of making River of Grass the best place to be on Sunday mornings. We love our music, our Candles of Community, our wonderful sermons and ... we love our “social hour!” Team members will learn and perform the dance that supports our warm hospitality time together each Sunday.



We all can be a part of this beautiful dance. Some may sway gently to encourage the shy soul at the welcome table, others may do a two-step with a partner and put out the handicap ramp, while others still, may enjoy that boogie-woogie beat that is the coffee and cookies; still others may hustle up an artistic display for the service. There is a dance for each of us.

The plan is to have four teams of at least twelve people. Each team will be responsible for hospitality for one month, and then they will be off for three months. Team members will be able to choose what tasks they are willing to do. When some members are out of town, other members fill in. The idea is to have many hands and light work, all while making new friends as we have fun and build our welcoming and beloved community.

Won’t you join the dance? You will receive more information in your email and newsletters soon. For more information, see Zena Tucker or email membership@riverofgrassuu.org.

UU JUSTICE FLORIDA: BENDING FLORIDA TOWARD JUSTICE

Steve Jens-Rochow, UUJF Secretary

UU Justice Florida [UUJF] <http://www.ujusticefl.org/> is our state justice action network that River of Grass voted to support financially at our Annual Meeting in 2014. UUJF partners with UUs in Florida and other justice organizations to promote justice, equity and compassion in public policy. Our three core issues are Climate Change, Escalating Inequality and Justice for All.

UUJF supports the Voting Rights Restoration Amendment. <https://floridarrc.com/> Forty-eight River of Grass members have already signed it to have a constitutional amendment on the ballot in November, 2018 to restore the voting rights of over 1,500,000 non-violent ex-felons in Florida who have paid their debt to society.

UUJF is a membership organization. All Unitarian Universalists in Florida are members. We will have an online Annual Meeting on Saturday, September 16, at 10 am by Zoom video conference link to share input on our core issues and to discuss justice issues. A zoom link will be sent out later.

Become part of our growing justice network. To have immediate impact on current issues, UUJF encourages you to sign up for infrequent email alerts at <http://www.ujusticefl.org/contact>. Please include your full ZIP + 4. With that information, UUJF will be able to send specific targeted action alerts to constituents in a Legislator's district. Together we can make a difference.



EXPLORE COVENANT GROUPS

Submitted by Ingrid Furlong

covenant
groups



September is coming, and, with that, the resumption of many of our Covenant Groups. These are groups in which members seek to grow spiritually by exploring the experiences of their lives and sharing insights and confidences with one another. It is one of the primary ways by which we grow closer to one another and as a congregation. If you are an old, new, or prospective member, and you are looking for a way to find deeper connections with others at River of Grass, joining a Covenant Group may be exactly what you are seeking. Groups typically meet once or twice monthly and may take place during the day or evening. For more information, and to sign up for a group near you, contact Janet Schwartz at covenant-groups@riverofgrassuu.org. She will help you find the covenant group in the time and place that is right for you.

Also, if you are in a covenant group and wish to become a facilitator, contact Janet Schwartz at covenant-groups@riverofgrassuu.org. Training and follow-up support is available.

“CHIP IN FOR A CHAIR CAMPAIGN” JULY 5 – AUGUST 2, 2017

150 New Chairs Are Coming! 150 New Chairs Are Coming! 150 New Chairs Are Coming!

Our New Chairs Are Arriving Mid To Late August and Won't That Be Divine!

This Campaign will last for one month only July 5th through August 2nd and is open to all Members, Friends and Guests. Systems will be ready to accept donation on July 5th on the ROG website.

Any surviving chairs will be repurposed in other areas; balance donated or sold.

We will have a “sit-in” to welcome our new seating and celebrate our choice AND all those contributing to the “Chip In For A Chair Campaign” will be recognized!

- ◆ You can buy one or more chairs at \$50 each, or an amount lesser or greater toward the total bill. There are two distinct selections on the website for each type of donation right on our opening page.
- ◆ Each chair costs \$50, including tax, shipping and dollies for storage and mobility.
- ◆ Your contributions may also be made by check, with a note in the memo line indicating “Chair Campaign” and number of chairs your contribution covers (or any amount you wish to donate). Your check can be dropped into the lock box outside Rev Amy's office, the collection plate, or mailed to River of Grass.
- ◆ CLICK right here to “Chip In For YOUR Chair”! <http://riverofgrassuu.org/chair-campaign.html>



Your donation to offset this \$7000 expense is gratefully appreciated. Please see Rita Cherubini at River of Grass, contact her by email at Chip4Chair@riverofgrassuu.org, or contact her by phone or text at 781.856.2335. I am very excited to be your Chief Chippy!

**Thanks for
Donating!**
