



Unitarian Universalist  
Society of Geneva



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# Pioneer Newsletter

## July - August 2016

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the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

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Random observations on a Sunday afternoon while my brain is melting ~

I am very grateful for air conditioning. There are still a few of us around who remember the Sanctuary before the air conditioning was installed. We refused to do summer weddings. We had summer worship with several large, loud fans around the periphery, noisy ceiling fans that interfered with the sound system, and (no surprise)

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discouragingly low attendance on the really hot days. Things are much better now!

I am tremendously proud of our YRUU Habitat for Humanity team and their advisors. It was good to be here Sunday afternoon to welcome them all home, see everyone looking so happy (and hot and sweaty and tired...), knowing how much work they had done and how impressively well they had done it. Our young people are hard workers, committed to the Habitat projects, and in one short week, the creators of an amazingly close-knit community of shared experience. I'm glad Rev. Scott was able to go with them this year. I'm also glad they brought him safely back!

Good to see Luz and Jose Palacios back from their Florida vacation. Grateful to them, too ~ they returned on Sunday morning, and Sunday afternoon they were back at work, taking care of our buildings. So sorry we welcomed them home with temperatures in the 90s....

If you read this in time, I do hope you'll come out on Friday night, July 29, for the UUSG Follies. Rev. Scott and I both got cajoled into taking part, and you don't want to miss our performances. Doors open at 7 PM for refreshments in the Common Room, then showtime is at 8. Come enjoy playwright

Steve Zrebiec's most recent contribution to great theater in Geneva!

This time next week, I'll be on Cape Cod, spending time with my mother, helping her with various projects, catching up with my sister and possibly my brother. Mother's in her late 80s now, and she runs circles around me. It will be a restful week, if only because I'll collapse on the couch when I can no longer keep up with her! After that, it's back to work, attending the annual Convention of the National Guild of Hypnotists in Marlboro, Mass. I'm looking forward to picking up new ideas to bring back to our Last Tuesday Hypnotism programs. Last Tuesdays will start up again in either August or September ~ if you're part of the LT group and you think you would attend a session on Tuesday, August 30, please let me know! I'll decide about the schedule after I know whether or not the interest is there for an end-of-summer induction.

I hope everyone is having a fun, at least occasionally restful, summer, with enough of a change of pace to be refreshing. Stay cool ~ see you in church!

Peace ~

Lindsay



**Scott's REgards**  
the Rev. Scott Talbot Lewis

Sam Atac, Grace Christiani, Alex Cordogan, Neil Glazier, Mara Handler, Natalie Hong, Bryce Jonke, Tekla Mach, Joe Masini, Mary Phillips, Emily Plass, Kenna Powell, Tyler Saam, Chris Stibal, Katy Vetter, Quinn Welsh and Ben Zinser

These are the names of some of the finest exemplars of the Unitarian Universalist passion for Social Justice I know! They are members of our YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) each of whom gave eight solid days of their time to travel to Red Wing, MN to be part of the annual Habitat for Humanity (H4H) trip.

I've seen some hard workers in my day, but these kids worked harder as volunteers than most people work for a wage. Hammering, lifting, sawing, measuring shoveling and leveling were just part of the raw work they did day-in and day-out in the blistering hot sun. They also cooked, served and cleaned up their own meals, every night. While they kept their areas spick and span and even made time for a vespers service each night at about 9 pm. If you don't think these young people are dynamite, come talk to me and I'll set you straight!

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva (UUSG) has made the Habitat for Humanity trip for 17 years, with as many as 38 participants. If you want to feel good about what kind of individuals our religious education program turns out look no further. Still not convinced, take a trip to the subterranean lair of our High School youth. On the outer wall you'll see the 15 group photographs of the participants since 2000. I wonder if we can even begin to calculate the number of work-hours these young volunteers have provided for families in need! These pictures are perhaps the thing that made me most excited to be involved with religious education at UUSG.

Adult volunteers are the golden wheels upon which all of our religious education programs run. We can't ever thank them enough...but I think this is particularly true of the H4H facilitators. The original organizers of the trip were Hal and Chris Schulman and Laura Laughlin followed them as the adult organizer. Nancy Christensen, who coordinates the details, rallies the troops and cooks like a 5-star chef, has been coordinating the trips most recently. Our adult volunteers are without question the most skilled and loving youth advisors

I know. They are: Jenny Benjamin, Mary Margaret Jonke, Andy Montgomery, Jeff Stibal and Tom Zimmerman. Even if you've never had a child participate in this program, you should thank them. They've made this church a better place. Heaven knows where else they might spend the week of vacation time they so lovingly donate to our kids and H4H.

The praise from Red Wing citizens was superlative too!

Lastly, but most importantly, I want to say that these kids are some of the kindest, affirmative and justice seeking people I've ever seen! They work together with unbelievable cooperation and mindfulness. They exemplify what it means to live in covenanted community. Be proud, be extremely proud!

With joy, love and gratitude,

Rev. Scott

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### **boardblog: Relationship-Building**

I am excited to be serving as the Board President for this year. UUSG has a long history of exceptional leaders, and I hope I can live up to the high standards they have set.

At this point in the life of our congregation, I have heard the following expressed:

- In 3 years Lindsay will be leaving -- will this adversely affect our membership?
- How do we ensure that people are firmly committed to participating in and supporting UUSG with time, talents, and finances?
- We have a commitment to form relationships with people from other



churches and nonprofits to make a difference in our region. Don't we need stronger internal relationships first?

Each of these is a concern held by people who truly care about our church. Realizing how deeply people feel about these issues, I plan to spend time and energy promoting relationship-building among the members and friends of UUSG. To be honest, it is easy for me to claim this goal. We already have some strong initiatives with similar ends: the WOW Team, the Stewardship Team, programming for women, Lindsay's prayer circles, and other efforts all address this need to one degree or another. It is no coincidence that these programs have been created recently. Having a strong religious community is essential to the future of our church.

My focus on relationship-building has roots in community organizing. People who have worked with the Fox River Valley Initiative are aware that "one-on-one" conversations based on sincere listening and caring create a strong foundation for a community. According to this perspective, there are two types of power: one is rooted in organized people and the other in focused money. My goal is to help people feel more deeply connected to our church community. Being assured that people in this community care about each other helps build stronger commitments to each other and to the purposes and programs which unite us.

To this end, I have begun talking with the Stewardship Team about plans to expand their ministry of "friend-raising" to build strong relations. You should be hearing more about this as the year goes on. But you don't need to wait for someone to be in touch with you. I am inviting members and friends to contact me by clicking on this link: [boardpresident@uusg.org](mailto:boardpresident@uusg.org).

Together, we can strengthen our community by building deeper relationships. I invite you to join me in this effort,

Jean Pierce

Questions or comments? Contact the [Board of Directors](#).



## July Music: Musical Fireworks!

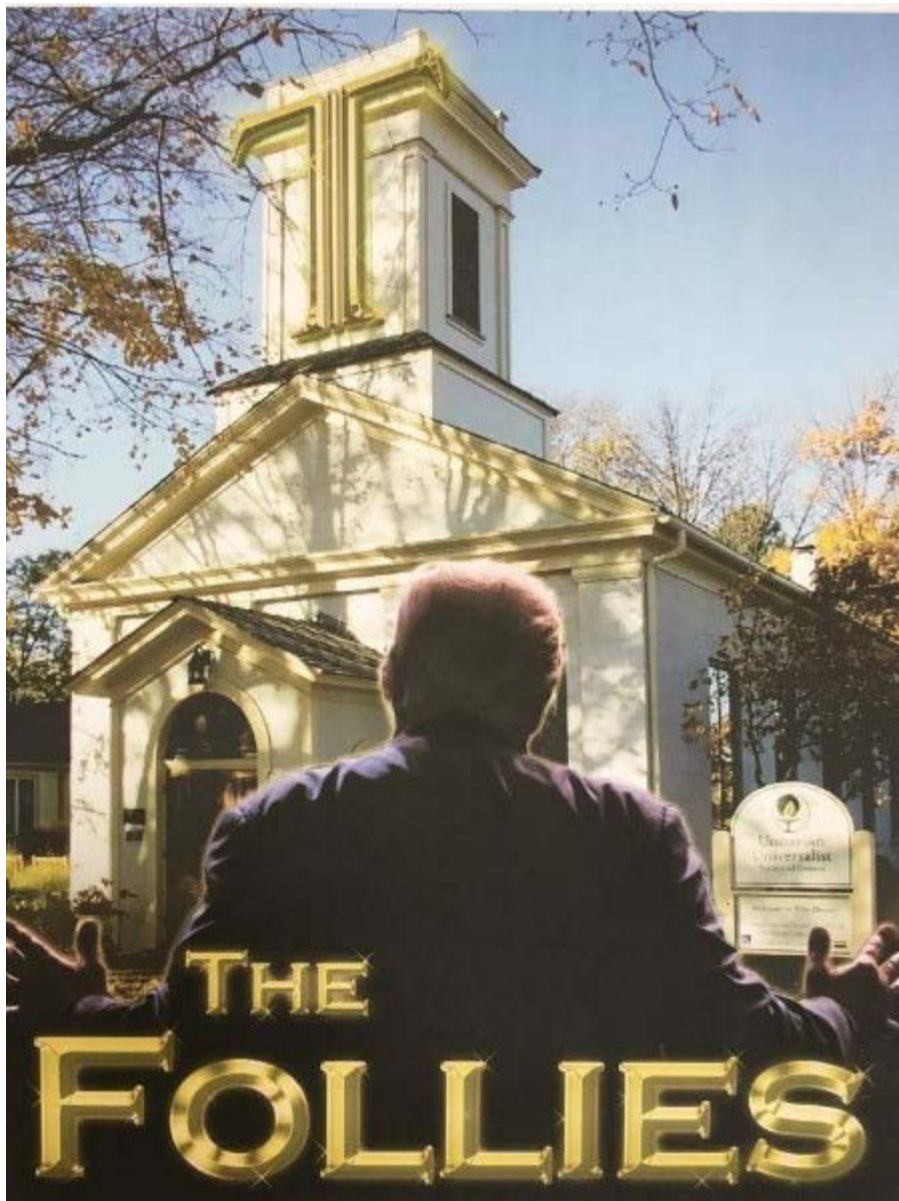
The month of July has been full of musical fireworks beginning with the sweet harmonies of Kelly Herz and her parents, Julie Riffle and Thom Thomas, with accompaniment on guitar by Seth Prisco and on piano by Sandra Anderson-Cordogan. Cynthia Spiegel's voice soared in song, with piano accompaniment from Lynn Fisher McCanne, and Cynthia led everyone in singing a Taize-style postlude with Lynn on percussion. Pianists Amanda Bollero and Dean Malambri complete our month with beautifully played selections.

A service about sacred humor was beautifully underscored by multiple selections of classically bent music with a variety of comic undertones featuring Tracy Rosenkrans on the double bass, Meredith Vandre on triangle and flute, Honna Austin on violin. Patricia Arzaga was part of an inspired sketch in which she portrayed a 7-year-old pianist in one of the morning's Saint-Saens pieces.

Coming up in August, we'll be treated to originals by our own world-class singer/songwriter Kristin McFadden; Sophia Spiegel, Anna Rosenkrans, Dean Malambri & Patricia Arzaga and Ruth Cavanaugh leading an all-music service with Connor Mackey and Olivia Flanigan.

Every weekend is a one-of-a-kind creation. Each of our musicians and groups carefully prepares music to fit the particular service, presenting a worship experience that we believe is unique to the area. To share your own special gift, offer suggestions, or express your appreciation of our work, please reach out to Music Director Tracy Rosenkrans at [music@uusg.org](mailto:music@uusg.org).

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### **The Follies Returns - Friday, July 29 at 8pm**

The Follies, a comedy made loosely about UUSG, will make its only appearance on Friday, July 29 at 8 pm. The reception - which will include beer, wine and food begins at 7pm. Please mark your calendars. The Follies all-cast this year includes Lindsay Bates, Scott Talbot Lewis, Diane Handler, Chung Liang, Lou Pierce, Tracy Rosenkrans, Melissa Auer, Llona Steele, Tony Gibbons, Joani Foster and Steve Zrebiec. The actresses and actors have been preparing hard to make sure you have a great time. Admission is free, and you'll have more fun than you ever had or your money back!





### **Senior Minister on Vacation and Study Leave**

The Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates will be on vacation August 1-9, and on Study Leave/Conference August 10-18.

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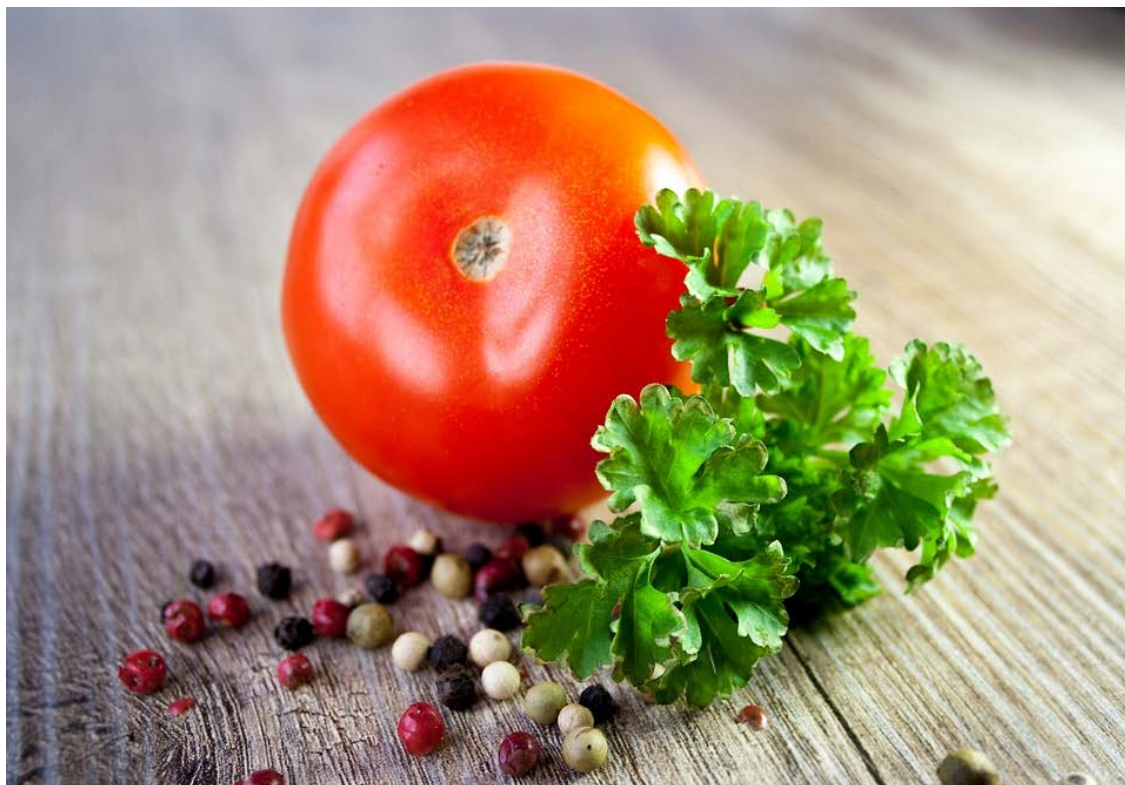
### **Friday Flick: *Peace Officer***

We were hoping to show the film *Planetary* for our August Friday Flick's presentation. Due to a snag in licensing, however, we will be moving that to a later date. Instead, we will be screening *Peace Officer*, on Friday, August 26 at 7:00 pm in the Common Room.

*Peace Officer* is a documentary about the increasingly militarized state of American police as told through the story of 'Dub' Lawrence, a former sheriff who established and trained his rural state's first SWAT team only to see that same unit kill his son-in-law in a controversial standoff 30 years later. Driven by an obsessed sense of mission, Dub uses his own investigation skills to uncover the truth in this and other recent officer-

involved shootings in his community, while tackling larger questions about the changing face of peace officers nationwide.

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### **Joseph's Deli Meatballs for Lazarus House dinners for September 3!**

It's time to sign up to help prepare lunches for 15 or dinners for 60 for the first Saturday, September 3. Remember the incredible meatballs served at our Swedish Days Booth? We have a 10-pound bag of them plus buns available for use by folks who prepare an upcoming dinner. Just defrost them, add sauce, and you will have an unforgettable meal for the residents of Lazarus House. Sign up either on the Social Justice Bulletin Board in the Common Room or [online](#).

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### Promoting Practical Goodness Awards

David Tomell, for generously making coffee on Sunday mornings. Thank you David!

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### **Sit Down and Be Counted!**

The Fox River Valley Initiative team at UUSG needs your presence at an Assembly July 30, 3-4:30 pm at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in St. Charles. Last October more than 35 members attended an assembly, giving our church the distinction of having the highest attendance of any organization in the Collaborative. Let's keep our title! [Sign up here](#) to tell us you will be present at the Assembly. The purpose of this Assembly will be to explore how the broad-based organization can continue to make a difference in our region.

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### **New2U**

Setting up an apartment this fall? Check out New2U for great items to furnish your new pad. Also check out: a Snap-On tool box, a bike rack, and a Hammond organ. Because sales have been brisk, we could use more listings -- time to clean out the basement! Monies support UUSG. Questions, contact [new2u@uusg.org](mailto:new2u@uusg.org). To list an item, [www.uusg.org/new2u-listing](http://www.uusg.org/new2u-listing).

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## CARNIVALE UUSG!

We are now accepting donations for the 2016 UUSG All-Church Auction, Carnivale UUSG! Please click [HERE](#) for a printable donation form or make a donation at [togetherauction.com/uusg](http://togetherauction.com/uusg). Click on DONATE. Enter your phone number and use the last four digits of your phone number for your pin.

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## Volunteer Appreciation

We give our heartfelt thanks to the following people:

The Social Justice Team thanks Glenda Peck, who provided lunches for Lazarus House; Tom Russo and Jean Pierce who arranged for pizzas for the shelter's dinner, and Jeanne Neltner, who stayed overnight.

Greeters: Sandy Bottoms, Dan Bottoms, Pam Galligan, Adam Kuc, Chris

Schulman, Hal Schulman, Martha Tabis

Counters: Brad Lipman, Ellie Radvanovsky, Kevin Beyer, Dave Moore, Jamie Carroll, Patricia Ward, Lynn Steele, the Finance Team

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### **Pizza Booth Results and Thank You's!**

Number of Pizzas: 198  
Number of Volunteers: 95+  
Number of 2-hour shifts: 107  
Money Raised for Our Youth's  
Habitat for Humanity Trip: \$337.25  
Money Raised for UUSG: \$3,145.43

A HUGE thank you goes to Mary Swanson and Tom Russo, who coordinated the fundraiser, worked many hours, and were always on hand to answer questions and encourage volunteers! We're so grateful for your energy and dedication. We couldn't have done it without you.

We are also extremely grateful to our Day Managers, who kept the Booth stocked with pizza and worked hard to make it a success: Bill Scown, Bob Atac, Nancy Christensen, Eleanor Hamilton, Molly MacKay Zacker, Patrick McGleam, and Bob Swanson.

Many thanks to this year's counters, who handled the money so the Day Managers could concentrate on pizza: Brad Lipman, Jim O'Malley, and Kevin O'Neill

And last but not least: to everyone who worked at the Booth, THANK YOU!

Julia Adams, Bob Atac, Sam Atac, Katie Baar, Aron Bartoszek, Jennifer Benjamin, Dan Bottoms, Sandy Bottoms, Anne Brink, Jill Brown, Jodi Brown, Chris Brown, Nancy Christensen, Grace Christiani, Bev Coe, Alex Cordogan, Teal Cyko, Al Drover, Ann Drover, Aaron Fogleman, Jim Frazier, Ellie Fusaro, Diane Gallentine, Cari Gesiakowski, Keith Gesiakowski, Tony Gibbons, Neil Glazier, Wendy Glazier, Nancy Goodfellow, Eleanor Hamilton, Diane Handler, Mara Handler, Sharon Hansen, Amy Hong, Natalie Hong, Sally Jones, Eric Jonke, Mary-Margaret Jonke, Jen Klein & Family, Tekla Mach, Joe Masini, Anna Masini, Kathleen McFadden, Patrick McGleam, Kathy Meier, Samantha Mejia, Omar Mejia, Jan Miller, Vohny Moehling, Jenny Montgomery, Ellie Montgomery, David Montgomery, Craig Moore, Carol Myers, Claudine Myers, Jeanne Neltner, Pat O'Malley, Linda O'Neill, Glenda Peck, Mary Phillips, Jean Pierce, Lou Pierce, Cathi Plass, Emily Plass, Kenna Powell, Tyler Saam, Jason Sapet, Kerry Sapet, Robert Savage, Hal Schulman, Christine Schulman, Bill Scown, Jeff Stanley, Chris Stibal, Jeffrey Stibal, Susan Stibal, Bob Swanson, David Tomell, Renée Tomell, Meredith Vandre, Pat Vary, Katy Vetter, Althea Welsh, Elliott Welsh, Molly Zacker, Benjamin Zinser, and Steve Zrebiec.

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### **Ongoing Teacher Recruitment**

We are forming teacher teams for next year's LRE classes. Thank you to all who have signed up already!

We plan to offer 8 classes, most of which operate best with 4-teacher teams. The 4-teacher teams allow teachers to rotate weekends, exchange lead and assistant roles, and frees up schedules so teachers can rejuvenate by attending services or having an occasional Sunday off.

We provide curriculum, supplies, guidance, teacher meetings, a yearly recognition ceremony, and even an annual party!



You get to learn about who UUs are, what we believe in, and provide valuable lessons to our future UUs.

Interested? Need more information? Let us know by contacting [Rev. Scott](#) or [Cathi Plass](#).

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### **Save the Date!**

The 4th Annual UUSG Women's Retreat will be held February 3-5, 2017.

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### **Annual Homecoming Picnic**

Join UUSG members and friends as we celebrate our 10th Annual UUSG Picnic, Sunday, Sept. 11, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. at [Wheeler Park Pavilion](#). Fried chicken is provided. Bring your favorite covered dish along with a chair. Register to attend on the Common Room bulletin board or [online](#). The deadline for registration is Sept. 7. Questions? Contact Cindy Vacek at [picnic@uusg.org](mailto:picnic@uusg.org).

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### **Stay Connected!**

The Social Media Team asks everyone to “like” [UUSG on Facebook](#) to stay connected with us throughout the week! Questions, comments, photos to share or content ideas? Please [email us](#), we would love to hear from you!

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## Book Exchange

Take a peek at the UUSG Book Exchange across from the James St. entrance. Borrow or keep any of the books in the barrister shelves. No sign in/out – just enjoy! Latest additions include: *Juggling*, *How Good Do We Have to Be?*, and *Meditations on Design*.

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## Fair Trade Products: Think BOB!

Sale with benefits: Equal Exchange will offer a complimentary BOB ("bag of [coffee] beans") with every Equal Exchange fair trade purchase. Complimentary BOBs are possible due to the generosity of Equal Exchange. Look for the brown bags marked "BOB." Take one home with you when you purchase 1 or more items from the fair trade armoire in the Common Room.



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