Reflections

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION
DAVIE, FLORIDA
FEBRUARY 2014

I HEART ROG UU

RoG

by Rev. Amy Carol Webb, Consulting Minister

ow's that for a bumper sticker? In this Beloved Community, I can think of a whole bevy of folks who are already hatching a plan to have a pile of such at the Welcome Table in the foyer having only just read that sentence! Because they do, you do, we do -- love this River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

Coming into this month of hearts and flowers, River of Grass is also coming into its mid-year meeting for 2013-2014, a time the congregation comes together to consider what hearting RoG UU really means – and really takes. It's the time we pause in our historically enthusiastic flow to take stock of where River of Grass is in its history, the steps, the tasks, the challenges in its progress toward the vision set forth the day it was born, and at the various bends and turns taken, expected and not, on the way to that vision's fulfillment.



Fifteen years ago this month, the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation set forth its charter – and began to chart

its path into new life as a religious community. Every climbing step along that path was accomplished because you heart RoG UU. Steps that were easy. Steps that were hard. Steps you didn't think you could take, then did. Steps you took that needed to be retraced. Steps that frightened you and you took them anyway. Steps that opened onto new horizons. Steps that led to this one moment in the life of this Beloved Community, and the lives of each one who makes it so.

So, what will the rest of this year bring? Next year? The next five? Fifteen?

That will depend on how you heart River of Grass. How much inspiration, aspiration and perspiration. Now that's a deceivingly pithy little alliteration that belies the depth of fortitude and faithfulness needed to step toward the next threshold of inward and outward growth on River of Grass' skyline. Fact is, like any other relational weaving of human history and hope, the evolution of a religious community isn't always so tidy.

Sometimes getting to the heart of the matter -- getting to the

truth of who we are, what our faith is and how we will live into that faith in the world and among ourselves – can get downright messy. That's why we convenant together. To walk side by side through the messy parts. As we remind one another each time we gather –

Love is the spirit of this congregation, and service is its law.
This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
To seek the truth in love,
And to help one another.

Or put another way – We Heart RoG UU.



IN THIS ISSUE



(Click here or go to www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html)

FEBRUARY SUNDAY



February 2 Rev. Amy Carol Webb

February 9 Maddi Gutfreind

February 16 Rev. Amy Carol Webb

February 23 Leana Bresnahan, New Member Service

№ 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.

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 worshipers.

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

River of Grass

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

Phone 954-723-7877

www.riverofgrassuu.org office@riverofgrassuu.org

Newsletter

Editor	Esther Sampol
Design & Production	
Copy Editors	
	Zena Tucket

Congregational Administrator Sophia Brown

Board of Trustees

President	Marjorie Loring
Vice President	Leana Bresnahan
Secretary	Zena Tucker
Treasurer	Gary Gonzalez
Trustee	Tom Robinson
Trustee	Natalie Hutton-Corp
Trustee	Audrey Stang
Trustee	Troy Gies
Youth Representative	James May

Touth Representative James May		
Committee Chairs		
Auction		
Caring Ingrid Furlong		
Community Awareness Esther Sampo		
Concert Aaron Stang		
Consulting Minister's Diane Diaz & Committee on Ministry Esther Sampo		
Facilities Susan Juncosa		
Faith Development Karen Gonzalez & Diane Lade		
Finance Janet Schwartz		
Membership Diane Diaz & Bridget Morris		
Nominating TBA		
Pastoral Care Riley Cothran, Pat Katz & Marjorie Loring		
Personnel Audrey Stang, Esther Sampo & Janet Schwartz		
Service & Social Justice Steve Jens-Rochow & Judi Oltmans		
Shared Ministry		
Stewardship Ken Bresnahar		
Worship Kathy Jens-Rochow		

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT YOUR PERSONAL BALANCE SHEET

Marjorie Loring, President Board of Trustees

ith February comes the annual Mid-Year Congregational Meeting where leadership offers its "State of the Congregation Address" to our membership. It is the time we set aside to recap and reflect upon our ministry, evaluate the quality of our worship and programming, and check up on both our spiritual and financial stability. Think of it as a "systems check" and a "health screening". There are many things that your Board of Trustees depends on to keep this congregation in balance - functioning and healthy - and make no mistake; you are one of those things. "Who me?" you might be saying. "Yes, you." As a member supported congregation, everything that each one of us chooses to contribute comes together to become the very breath of life that is River of Grass. The presence of our faith tradition in this world is the fruit of our combined time, talent, and treasure. This means that your balance sheet has a direct correlation to the balance sheet of our congregation. It is symbiotic.



This is why it is so important that you also take this month to check your own personal balance sheet of time, talent, and treasure. Is what you get from this community equal to what you are putting into it? If not, what can you offer to bring the give-and-take into balance? Do you commit to show up and support our programming? Just by attending a café concert or an adult faith development workshop you are contributing to the health of our programming. Are you willing to step up and take a leadership role in a committee or small group? No experience is required to be successful - there are mentors everywhere just waiting to be your guides. Have you kept up to date with your pledge? Our monthly budget is based upon your financial commitment. If you are behind,

catch up if you can. You may be only one, but your contribution does make a difference. Let's make it a priority to bring our time, talent, and treasure into balance so that together we can keep our growing congregation healthy.

It takes a village to raise a congregation. It takes time, talent, and treasure to keep it in balance.



IN LOVING MEMORY JOHN JUDY

Our dear friend and long time member, John Judy, 89, of Plantation, Florida died on January 20, 2014. He is survived by his wife, children and grandchildren. John was a calming presence among us, frequently hanging out in our social corner after services and sharing stories and listening to ours. We loved to hear his adventures of this full and active life. He enjoyed kayaking rivers close to home and around the world. He was at home in a diner with a burger or in a fine French restaurant with crepes and wine.

Growing up in rural North Carolina, he learned about hard work and hard times. When he received to call to serve his country in World World II, he thought it incredible that the first ocean he had laid eyes upon was the Pacific Ocean when he departed from the west coast. While Mr. Judy shared a few stories of his time in the South Pacific and Japan, he purposely did not reveal those episodes that were too painful to verbalize. His experience permanently shaped his perspectives on life and war.

After the war, John used the GI Bill to get his degree in engineering and soon found work in Ohio with a pipeline company. Here he met Elise, a first grade school teacher; they fell in love and married. After finding new work in Florida, the Judy's moved to Florida in 1959. John and Elise raised their intelligent and lovely daughters and worked until retirement here in west Broward. They both enjoyed traveling, journeying frequently for camping, kayaking and exploring. As a celebration of his 85th birthday, John made a white water kayaking trip. Recently, he and Elise traveled to Costa Rica for the holidays and joined his daughters and their families for a happy reunion. John's passing is a result of many complications after a recent accident. He passed peacefully in the company of his wife Elise and daughters, Wendy and Paula.

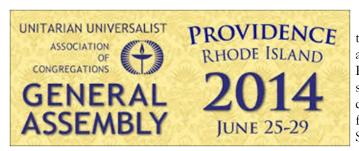
In sorrow, we bid farewell to John Judy. May we be comforted by warm memories of his quick smile and wit, stories of adventure and the sparkle in his blue eyes.

BOARD MATTERS

Zena Tucker, Secretary **Board of Trustees**

> ur January Board meeting was delayed one week due to the New Year holiday; therefore, "Board Matters" will be brief.... just like the month of February.

But, not to worry, you will be informed of board happenings at our upcoming Mid-Year Congregational Meeting. Please plan to stay after service on February 2nd to get the latest news.



General Assembly 2014 is coming! We are seeking nominees to serve as delegates to this annual gathering of UUs from around the world, held this year June 24-29 in Providence, Rhode Island. While the date seems far off, there are several scholarships available for youth, young adults, congregational delegates and lay leaders. The deadline for these applications is fast approaching. Also, fees are reduced for early registrations. See the UUA website for more information.

All River of Grass members interested in attending GA 2014 as a delegate, please see Zena Tucker in person or send her an email at: secretary@riverofgrassuu.org no later than March 1, 2014.

That's it for this month. As always, thanks for all the ways each of you contribute to River of Grass. See you around the cookie table soon!



our Board of Trustees has approved the \$300.00 purchase of a new top of the line dishwasher for our kitchen. Not only will it be quieter, it will be able to hold many more dishes and address some of the challenges we have with our existing older model.

Member Scott Opiela, who is in a position to get this dishwasher for us at this special price, has also offered to install it for us thereby saving us the additional cost of an installation. Thank you, Scott!!!

Since the dishwasher expense is not in the current budget, this provides an opportunity for members who wish to contribute to help cover the cost to donate a designated gift offering in any amount. Please identify your contribution as "Designated Gift – Dishwasher".

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS Diane Diaz, Chair

n Sunday, January 12th we held a Pathway to Membership Class from 12-4pm. Five visitors/friends attended to find out about Unitarian Universalism, its history and current practices, and our dynamic and growing River of Grass community. They were joined by our President, Marjie Loring, Vice President, Leana Bresnahan, Treasurer, Gary Gonzalez, membership committee and other leaders.



Karen McKinnon, Tori Schreiber, Karen and Stan Forrester and Doug Allen have committed to joining our congregation and we look forward to welcoming them as they sign the book on February 23 during the Charter Sunday/New Member Service.

For any and all who are interested in exploring our denomination, there will be a sign up sheet for the next class (date to be determined) in the Hospitality Area on Sunday. Please talk to our membership committee members stationed at the front door and/or New Members Are Joining contact Diane Diaz at membership@riverofgrassuu.org.

Welcome – bienvenido – bem-vindo – willkommen – bienvenu!

SERVICE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Judi Oltmans and Steve Jens-Rochow, Co-Chairs

LifeNet4Families January Volunteer Day

Thank you to Zena, Rick, Ken, Bev, Gary, Scott, Carolyn, James, Hal, Judi, Rick and Michael for volunteering at the LifeNet4Families pantry on January 11th! There were pallets of food to be unloaded and shelves to be stocked. Everyone worked together as a team in assembly line style and passed everything from boxes of milk to loaves of bread. Ninety-one boxes of food were packed up! Thank you all for your service to the community!

If you'd like to join us at our next LifeNet4Families Saturday Volunteer Day, we volunteer there once a month. Upcoming dates are February 8, March 8 and April 12. Check our River of Grass calendar for all the LifeNet4Families Saturday Volunteer Days in 2014. You can sign up at the SSJC corner at the back of the sanctuary or email us at ssjc@riverofgrassuu.org.

Can't make it to LifeNet? Every Sunday you can bring canned foods for LifeNet4Families to River of Grass and place them in the basket at the SSJC corner in the back of the sanctuary. They are especially in need of peanut butter and canned meats such as tuna, chicken or beef.









FAITH DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Ginger Parrish, Faith Development Coordinator



Where there is love there is life.
- Mahatma Gandhi

For many families, February is the month of chocolates and hearts, decorated shoe boxes and Valentine's cards. It is the month of love and friendship, a time to remember all those who are nearest and dearest to us. At River of Grass, we also want to *share* the love by participating in the UUA's 30 Days of Love campaign! This month, we will offer children and youth the opportunity to create works of art based on the idea of universal love as we discuss how love can be used as a means of overcoming oppression in the world. Please stay tuned for dates and details!

We would also like to invite you to join us on Sunday, February 9th at 9 a.m. for our next Faith Development Meeting. These monthly meetings offer parents, teachers, and the congregation at large the opportunity not only to find out about what's going on in Faith Development, but also to offer feedback and participate in the decision-making process. If you've had any questions, suggestions, or concerns relating to Faith Development, please join us on the 9th at 9:00 am and get in on the conversation!

Finally, I am pleased to announce that the next month will see our children and youth preparing to run their very own service! Families: please mark your calendars and plan to join us on the following dates:

- ♦ Sunday, February 16, 12 p.m. 3 p.m. Youth Voices: Youth Workshop Part 1 with Rev Amy
- Sunday, March 2, 12 p.m. 3 p.m. Youth Voices: Youth Workshop Part 2 with Rev Amy
- ♦ Sunday, March 16 Youth-Led Worship

STANDING ON THE SIDE OF LOVE'S "THIRTY DAYS OF LOVE" PROGRAM

From January 18th through February 16th, SSJC will have activities for River of Grass members interested in participating in Standing on the Side of Love's "Thirty Days of Love" period of intentional action towards ending bigotry and oppression.

The Service and Social Justice Committee has three easy ways for everyone to participate in this transformative movement:



- 1. Sign up! Receive daily "30 Days of Love" emails by signing up here. Emails will contain suggested readings and activities for the whole family.
- 2. Express yourself! Bring an artwork, poem or story that expresses your thoughts on ending bigotry and oppression with the power of love. Artworks from all ages are welcome and will be displayed in the hospitality area. More guidelines and ideas are available from your SSJC committee at the following link, or take a handout available after service.
- 3. Learn! We are asking all members and leaders of small groups to use the Standing on the Side of Love theme for one of your meetings during this period. The UUA has provided a wonderful resource for this activity at this link.

Standing on the Side of Love is an interfaith public advocacy campaign that is sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association. For more information and ideas for 30 Days of Love visit their website.

THE EMPTY BOWLS PROJECT

Deb and Rob Giblin-Davis

My bowl, empty now, will soon be filled with precious food.

Beings all over the Earth are struggling to live.

How fortunate I am to have enough to eat.

- Thich Nhat Hahn

ow fortunate we are to participate once again in the Empty Bowls Project that helps support LifeNet4Families and puts food on the table for the hungry in Broward County. The Empty Bowls Project is a national program to raise money to feed the hungry and raise awareness of the pervasive nature of hunger in America. All money raised goes to LifeNet4Families, please check them out at www.lifenet4families.org.

At River of Grass, we will be participating in the Empty Bowls Project by making our very own ceramic bowls (under the tutelage of Rob Giblin-Davis) – and sharing a bowl of soup together on Empty Bowls Soup Sunday! (The bowls are ours to keep.) Here are the details:



On Sunday March 2, we will have the first ceramic bowl workshop after service then, on Sunday, March 16, we will glaze the bowls after service.

For those of you who feel you are *ceramically*-challenged, Rob Giblin-Davis will give instructions and provide one-on-one assistance on creating your bowl.

The bowls will be available on our Stone Soup/Empty Bowls Lunch, **Sunday, March 23**. If you chose not to make a bowl, you can still enjoy our Stone Soup lunch and donate to a good cause.

Dates to Remember

Sunday, March 2, bowl making workshop at River of Grass after service Sunday, March 16, glaze bowls at River of Grass after service Sunday, March 23, Stone Soup/Empty Bowls lunch – after service

Donation: \$20 donation for soup lunch and bowl / \$15 donation for soup only (adults) and \$3 donation for soup only (kids)

Adults and children of all ages welcome!

If you have any questions, please contact Deb Giblin-Davis at emptybowls@riverofgrassuu.org. Please look for the signup sheet in the hospitality area before and after Sunday service.

AUCTION NEWS

Esther Sampol and Sheryl Cattell

Picture this! In less than 4 short weeks, we will be:

- enjoying an amazing dinner while supporting ARC Broward Culinary School,
- having a blast gambling with fUUnny money and hoping to win one of three BIG, BIG prizes,
- dancing to hip tunes, and
- bidding/shopping for incredible items this year.

Our River of Grass Annual Auction - this year, with a Casino theme*, will be held on **Saturday, March 1**st, at River of Grass, from 6 pm to 10 pm.

What's left to do?

Well, we need YOU to buy your tickets now so we can plan accordingly and let our caterer know how many we expect to wine and dine - and, also, since space is limited, we don't want you to miss out on the ROG event of the year!

How do I purchase tickets?

You can follow this <u>link</u> and purchase your tickets with a credit card - OR - you can purchase your tickets on Sunday, after service, with a credit card, check, or cash.

What else can I do to help?

We could use a few more volunteers to help out the week before the auction with setup and preparation. Just send us an email to <u>auction@riverofgrassu.org</u> and we'll put you on our list of helpers (no meeting attendance required!).

Anything else?

Well, YES, now that you mention it. We still need donations! You can download our donation solicitation letter here –and take copies with you everywhere you go! Restaurants, museums, attractions, services! If each member solicited just ONE gift certificate from a place that they frequent, think of how many donations we could gather. JUST ONE! Go on - you can do it and support our beloved River of Grass!

What if I've never played Poker, Black Jack, or Craps before?

We've got you covered! On Sunday, February 9th, we are hosting a *How to Play the Tables* pre-auction party right after hospitality time. You can learn the basics in a fun, collaborative environment, pick up a quick reference guide to bring with you – and we'll even feed you (light finger foods will be provided). The gathering is free but we just need you to sign up during hospitality time so we know how many to expect! You can also sign up by emailing: auction@riverofgrassuu.org.

Thank you for your support! We couldn't do this without you!

*CASINO EQUIPMENT FOR THE RIVER OF GRASS ANNUAL AUCTION 2014 GENEROUSLY DONATED BY NORTHSTAR FINANCIAL PLANNERS, INC.



RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ Esther Sampol

Richard Smith - Saturday, February 1, 2014 Show starts at 8:00 pm - Doors open at 7:30 pm



The most amazing guy I know on Guitar. He can play anything I know, only better. ~Chet Atkins

Richard first met his hero, the Godfather of finger style guitar, Chet Atkins when he was only eleven and was invited by Chet to play with him on stage at Her Majesty's Theatre in London in front of an audience of about a thousand. He played Chet's arrangement of Whispering, and Chet played along with him. Then the audience went mad and Chet asked him to play another one. By the time he reached his early twenties, both Chet Atkins and Jerry Reed began to refer to Richard Smith as their Hero and still do.

There seems to be no limit to Richard's ability to quickly master whatever guitar style captures his fancy. The complex styles of many guitar greats

including Django Reinhardt, Les Paul, and Lenny Breau have proved to be no impediment to his voracious musical appetite. Apart from his guitar virtuosity, he is also an accomplished banjo and violin player.

Richard has toured around the world, surprising audiences everywhere with his genius, showcasing a repertoire spanning an incredible range of musical styles from country, bluegrass, mainstream jazz, modern pop and rock, to classical guitar.

Tickets: \$15 Advance Purchase (click here) / \$20 at the door

UPCOMING RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ CONCERT

Saturday, March 22, 2014



Still on the Hill

Still on the Hill has set new boundaries of originality. This duo uses traditional instruments from their home in the Ozarks (mandolin, banjo, fiddle, guitar, harmonica and scrub board) and other oddities such as the musical saw, ukelin and tenor uke to create a kaleidoscope of musical color and texture: "These musicians have grafted the wild climbing vines of bluegrass, folk, classical and mountain music onto the hardiest of Ozark rootstock. The result is a yet-to-be-named hybrid music that simply compels people to stop

and listen, to pause in their hectic lives and pay attention to something they've never heard before. It's magic, and there's simply not enough magic in the world today. For advance tickets (only \$15), click here.



BUUKIES BOOK GROUP

by Toni Cattell and Kathy Jens-Rochow

Tet us know which books pique your interest! We always welcome book suggestions and new group members!

Here are the upcoming selections and dates for the bUUkies:

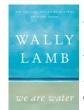
We encourage you to read the selection, but it is not required - all that is necessary is an interest in the book! 7:15 pm - meet at River of Grass for munchies and sharing 7:30 - 9:00 pm - book discussion and sharing

Next Up:

Wednesday, Feb. 19 - The Orphan Master's Son: A Novel by Adam Johnson - Pulitzer Prize for Fiction

An exquisitely crafted novel that carries the reader on an adventuresome journey into the depths of totalitarian North Korea and into the most intimate spaces of the human heart. - Pulitzer Prize Citation





Wednesday, March 19 - We are Water by Wally Lamb

We Are Water is a disquieting and ultimately uplifting novel about a marriage, a family, and human resilience in the face of tragedy, from Wally Lamb, the New York Times bestselling author of The Hour I First Believed and I Know This Much Is True.

Sunday, April 6th, After Service - This year's <u>UUA Common Read</u>: *Behind the Kitchen Door* by Saru Jayaraman. Book discussion will be led by Rev. Amy Carol Webb. This book is available through the UUA bookstore and Amazon and is available in e-format as well.

For all its talk of organic foods and sustainability, the restaurant industry pays little mind to the health and welfare of its own low-wage employees. In this persuasive volume, Jayaraman draws attention to servers, bussers, runners, cooks, and dishwashers across the country 'struggling to support themselves and their families under the shockingly exploitative conditions that exist behind most restaurant kitchen doors.

- Publishers Weekly

Behind the Kitchen Door invites Unitarian Universalists to intentionally consider their practices in restaurant dining. It makes visible the lives of people who are subject to discrimination and oppression based on economic status, race, ethnicity, gender, and/or immigration status.

- UUA

If you want more information, want to be added to the bUUkies email list or just want to make a suggestion, email us at buukies@riverofgrassuu.org - or strike up a conversation with Toni Cattell or Kathy Jens-Rochow, this year's bUUkies coleads.



A statewide conference presented by UU Justice Florida (UUJF) will be held on February 21st and 22nd, 2014 at the UU Fellowship of Vero Beach.

"How do you see the problem of climate disruption in relationship to the earth and her most basic relationships with us and the rest of creation?" The specific focus of the conference is on food and water, with solutions through earth rights, democratic/legislative rights of the people, and the effect of globalized addictions/need for recovery. There also will be music, time for small group interaction, and opportunities for dance and movement – a time to "feed" and heal body, mind, and spirit.

The first two hotel rooms reserved for the conference from a congregation will receive a rebate of \$50 from UUJF. For more information: HealingOurWorldAndOurselves.org

FULL MOON DAUGHTER CAMPING TRIP - WITHOUT THE CAMPING PART, TOO! **Diane Lade**



f you love camping without being stuck in a tent, you are in luck! We have rented cabins as well as reserved tent sites for our winter Full Moon Daughters winter camping trip, coming up on Feb. 15-17, President's Day weekend. We will be heading to Jonathan Dickinson State Park, about two hours up the road just north of Jupiter.

Canoeing or kayaking on the Loxahatchee River is the main outdoor attraction here. But there also are nature hikes, and paved trails for biking or

walking. Atlantic Ocean beaches are a short drive away. And, of course, we will have the best part of any of our trips: hanging out with a great group of women and girls who, just like you, love the outdoors. There will be crafts, communal meals, and evening campfires.



Full Moon Daughters, the River of Grass outdoor spirituality group for women and girls, is welcoming to those outside our congregation, so you can bring your friends. Women and girls of all ages are invited. Camping or cabin fees will be determined by the number attending. You MUST make reservations in advance by Feb. 8. To save your spot, email: fullmoondaughters@riverofgrassuu.org. Or sign up during hospitality hour after service on Sunday.

Thanks again to our in-residence nature educator, Christy Schultz, for leading our Everglades "slough slog" in January. It was a perfect weather day and a unique experience. Our next event, to be determined, will be on March 15, so mark your calendars.

See you on the water, along the trail and under the stars.



Matilda

The Sandlot

June 6

ATTENTION YOUNG ADULTS!

Zena Tucker, Secretary Board of Trustees



Get to know your River of Grass Compadres!

When: Feb 9, 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

What: Social time and no-host brunch. (Each person

responsible for their own food/drink.)

Where: 595 Tap and Tavern, 11300 W. State Road 84,

Davie, FL (Just down the road from ROG!)

Who: All River of Grass members and friends ages 18-35

More info

See Zena Tucker or email: secretary@riverofgrassuu.org