

Women Transcending Boundaries

Monthly Newsletter

Bringing women of faith together after 9/11



All information is also available on our Web site www.wtb.org

OCTOBER 2011

September 30	Empty Bowls Luncheon
October 2	Bhutanese Celebration
October 8	Northside CommUNITY Celebration
October 12	Schmai at Eve Galleria
October 16	Monthly WTB Meeting at Jowonio Life Cycles 3:00 - 5:00
October 24	Book Club: You Don't Have to be Wrong for Me to be Right by Brad Hirschfield
November 13	WTB meeting: Storytelling
December 11	WTB Dinner at the Islamic Center
January 29	World Harmony Festival organized by WTB & Interfaith Works
February/March	WTB meeting: TBA
April TBA	WTB International Dinner
May 20	Sycamore Hill Gardens Tour

ARRANGED MARRIAGES IN SYRACUSE, NY

Sunday, October 16

Jowonio School

3049 E. Genesee St.

Syracuse, NY

3:00 - 5:00



Please come join us on October 16th for our first WTB Program Meeting of this academic year. As part of our life cycle series we have examined topics of birth, childhood, marriage, and death from the personal viewpoints of women of many faith traditions. We will revisit the topic of marriage looking at the positive and negative aspects of arranged marriages as a cultural practice here in Syracuse from the perspective of a variety of faith traditions.

We will be meeting at **3:00 on Sunday, October 16th from 3 to 5 p.m. at Jowonio School** located at **3049 East Genesee Street** in Syracuse, across from Nottingham High School. Just drive to the parking lot in back, and enter the door off the parking lot. We will be gathering down the stairs in the Druger Community Room. If you cannot navigate stairs, call 633-2817 and we can open a level-passage door for you. We look forward to seeing old and new friends of Women Transcending Boundaries as we celebrate our tenth anniversary in October!



EMPTY BOWLS LUNCHEON

The Interreligious Food Consortium and SU are having an Empty Bowls Luncheon. SU students and local artists have created ceramic bowls (each one is unique). Nutritious soup will be served in the bowl of your choice which you can then take home!

When: Sept. 30 11-2:00

Where: [350 West Fayette Street](#)

Price: \$20 donation will benefit local food pantries

If you'd like to eat with WTB'ers, we will gather at 11:30...join us if you can!

For more perspectives on hunger in Syracuse, [click here](#)

The Bhutanese Community of Syracuse cordially requests the pleasure of the company of the WTB family to join in a joyful celebration of the greatest Hindu festival, Dashain. It will be held at the [Franklin Magnet School](#) of the Arts, 428 Alvord Street, Syracuse, on Sunday, October 2 from 11 am to 3 pm.

Invitation

The Bhutanese Community of Syracuse, NY
cordially requests the pleasure of the company of
Mr/Ms. **WTB Family**

*to join in joyful celebration of the greatest
hindu festival
(victory over demons)*

On 10/02/2011 Time : 11 am - 3 pm

Venue : Franklin Magnet School of the Arts
Syracuse City School District
428 S Alvord St. Syracuse, NY 13208

Happy Dashain & Deepawali

The invitation card features a central illustration of a woman's face with a crown, surrounded by decorative elements. The background is orange and yellow with floral patterns. There are small circular images of Hindu deities in the corners.



The Northside CommUNITY Project has the goal of bringing together the increasingly diverse communities of the Northside. They will hold a **“Festival for the Generations of Many Nations” on Saturday, October 8 from 11 to 4** at [Schiller Park](#). This will feature the arts, music, sports, and a celebration of the rich cultural diversity growing on the Northside of Syracuse. Come and visit the WTB booth. Danya, Betsy, Joy and Jennifer have agreed to staff the table, but we would love to have others come and share the fun. It's a great chance to meet and greet, as well as time to kick back and chat. Please come join us!

For more information contact Sandra Ostrander, 299-5408, rand.s.ostrander@yahoo.com

SCHMAI TIME

Come and join your sisters for friendly getting-to-know-you chat time. Our more-or-less-monthly **Schmai** will be on **Wednesday, October 12 from 10:30am to 12:30pm** at [Eve Galleria](#), 6456 Collamer Road, East Syracuse. This is very convenient to both the Thruway and Route 481.



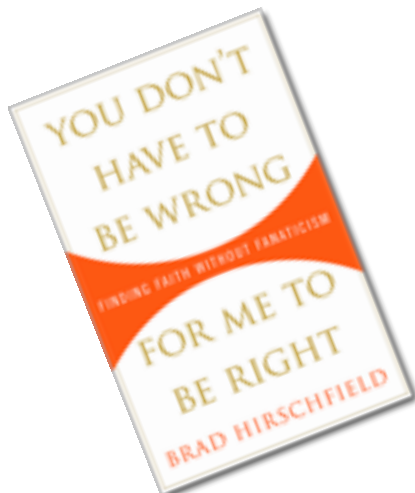
WTB BOOK CLUB

Monday, September 26

7:00 - 9:00 pm

Home of Jeanette Powell

[104 Carlton Drive, Syracuse](#)



The book club will be reading *You Don't Have to be Wrong for Me to be Right: Finding Faith Without Fanaticism* by Brad Hirschfield. “In his teens, Hirschfield joined a small group of fanatical Jewish settlers defending Hebron, but renounced that way of life after witnessing a scene of inexplicable and unrepentant violence. Now he posits that there is room for more than one religious or moral viewpoint to be correct.” (Publishers Weekly via Amazon)

The Syracuse Women's Information Center

Since 1972: Women Empowering Our Community (315) 478-4636



We have received information about upcoming events sponsored by the Women's Info Center. To see their line-up of coffee hours, poetry shares, discussion groups, drumming, choir, and Zen meditation, go to womensinfo.org. They are sponsoring a concert with Holly Near; for more information about her, go to <http://www.hollynear.com/tour.html>



Holly Near



Liz Spence and Janet Donoghue are heading the committee that is organizing our **fifth International Dinner**, which will be held next April. This has been our most successful fundraisers, as well as a favorite that many have requested that we repeat. These two talented and energetic women need help with budgeting, tickets, publicity, food, and entertainment. If you enjoy working on a discrete project with a beginning and an end, this is your opportunity to contribute your talents. You will get to know your WTB sisters better, contribute to an organization that you care about, and afterwards feel proud of a job well done. Contact Liz at 652-5676 or Janet at 744-6598.



A-OK! ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEKEND 2011 PROJECT SITES AND VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Syracuse's Mayor and Onondaga County's Executive jointly proclaimed September 9-11, 2011, as "A-OK! Acts of Kindness Weekend." Preparing for and carrying out "acts of kindness" brought the Greater Syracuse community together for the common good. Coordinated by Women Transcending Boundaries, more than 1,000 people came from every neighborhood, cultural background, and socioeconomic level for this weekend of civic activism. Volunteers included youth, college students, adults, and seniors; faith-based and neighborhood groups; members of nonprofits, charities, and grassroots groups; construction workers, gardeners, veterans and musicians. Working together on A-OK! Weekend projects helped make our neighborhoods healthier, safer, more attractive, and more hospitable. To see a list of volunteers and their projects, please [click here](#).



As we have reported here, Women Transcending Boundaries is a member of the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) and an affiliate of United Religions Initiative (URI). So we are delighted to report that The Interfaith Observer (TIO) is a new online newsletter whose goal is to be a connector and bridge-builder within the global interfaith community. To that end, TIO is a member of NAIN and an affiliate of URI. Go to www.theinterfaithobserver.org to learn more about the newsletter and to become a subscriber.

The Interfaith Observer



We are happy to announce that **Danya Wellmon** has been asked to serve on the Leadership Council of United Religions Initiative (URI)!!

WTBCares, a small spiritual support group within WTB, has been dormant for the last several years. Recently we have been getting requests from a variety of people, and so we decided to inform WTBers that it is active again, and tell women new to WTB what it is. WTBCares was created in March 2007 in response to requests from WTB women going through some sort of difficulty such as illness (personal or of a friend or family member), divorce, loss of work, death of a loved one, trouble in the family, etc. It is an extremely informal group of WTB women who pray, meditate, hold in the light, and sometimes, write cards, email, or call someone who is going through a hard time. We can be contacted through wtbcares@wtb.org or by phone or email. When one of us receives a request for support we ask some basic questions. Do you want to be identified or anonymous? What kind of contact would you prefer - cards, emails, phone calls, or simply to be held in the healing energy of those of us in WTBCares. We do not counsel or give advice. We do not share any information unless asked to do so, and then we get specific information about who can be notified.

If you would like to join WTBCares, please contact Jennifer Crittenden (RobertsCrittenden@verizon.net), Joy Pople (joypople@yahoo.com), or Judy Antoine (jantoine@twcny.rr.com) to be put on that listserv.



Email your reservation for a free lunch and discussion with Asma Uddin by Friday, September 30 to eacronk@syr.edu . This is an opportunity not to miss and is open to the public.

Muslim, Feminist, and First Amendment advocate Asma Uddin to share experiences in **Oct. 3 Luncheon Discussion at Hendricks Chapel**

Asma T. Uddin, a Muslim, feminist and First Amendment advocate, will share her work on both Muslim gender issues as well as religious freedom for people of all faith traditions during a Luncheon Discussion at Hendricks Chapel on Monday, Oct. 3. The luncheon will be held from noon to 1 p.m. in the Noble Room and is free and open to the public. A vegetarian lunch is free and available to all who RSVP to Elizabeth Cronk at eacronk@syr.edu by Thursday, Sept. 29

Uddin is devoted to protecting the right to question and explore one's faith--an issue especially important for Muslim women in many parts of the world today. She is the founder and editor in chief of Altmuslimah.com: Exploring Both Sides of the Gender Divide, a web magazine featuring compelling commentary on gender in Islam. She is also an international law attorney at The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a Washington, D.C.-based public interest law firm protecting the free expression of all religious traditions, and a Legal Fellow at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding.

“We are delighted to have Uddin host our first luncheon discussion of the academic year. Her work is critical to the contemporary conversation on religious freedom as it sits at the very intersection of religion, gender and politics.” Said Dean Tiffany Steinwert.

Uddin will be interviewed by Gustav Niebuhr, associate professor in the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and director of the Carnegie Religion and Society program, during an event at the Newhouse School earlier in the day.

For more information on the luncheon discussion, contact Hendricks Chapel at 443-2901.

Three high school exchange students, a girl and a boy from Thailand and a boy from Vietnam, are in need of local host families. If you are interested, please contact Linda Germain, the area coordinator for the Center for Cultural Interchange, a non profit organization which places and supervises exchange students from around the world.

315-216-6246, 315-561-1068, fax 315-341-2918, www.cci-exchange.org





HAPPY 10TH ANNIVERSARY WTB! 2001 - 2011

After volunteering to write something for the October WTB Newsletter for our anniversary, I pondered what to say to cover ten years of the work of Women Transcending Boundaries. Barbara Fought has done a magnificent job recording all of WTB's meetings, accomplishments, and national media coverage on our website - so it seemed redundant and self congratulatory to hold that all up again. Looking back at emails written after the first organizational meetings, I was struck by our prescience and am excerpting from them to present my state of mind, and Danya's to which so many wonderful women in Syracuse (and beyond) responded and continue to respond.

After the first meeting in my living room on I wrote: "It's been a crazy time for me (and I imagine for you) since we met on October 7th. Thanks for all of your expressions of encouragement, support and enthusiasm. We have an extremely interesting opportunity to come together with women of all faith communities of Syracuse in response to the world-shaking events since September 11. I feel as though my head is one of those little glass globes of a winter scene you shake to make snowflakes whirl around. It seems with each passing day since September 11, my mind has been shaken by either a news report about some new or suspected act of terrorism, or collateral damage of innocent people by not very smart bombs, or the successive unveilings of how US policy in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Egypt, Israel and Palestine have culminated in the religious, political and economic turmoil we are all now living with. When I turn on a radio or TV, read email and newspapers, or talk to a friend, my thoughts and emotions are sent swirling around and around looking for reason.....We are all listening, watching and reading local, state, US and international news on the radio, newspapers, TV and the Internet trying to get a fuller sense of this story of US actions and their result in the world. It is a disturbing, disillusioning and relentless education of opportunism and blind neglect in this country as events unfold. Because we represent a multi-faith group of intelligent women engaged in our community we have a unique opportunity to critically listen, learn, understand common concerns and act in ways we feel will address immediate and anticipated needs.....I think we should attempt to continue to critically evaluate enormously complicated political, social, economic and religious issues that confront us in a world of new fears that challenge us to look beyond our personal experience to the immediate and long-term future needs of both our local and world community."

On Oct. 21st Danya wrote this email: "How proud and yet humble I felt sitting amongst such a diverse group of very special women. Proud to be working with women dedicated to harmony and open-mindedness amidst our varying faiths, opinions and cultures. Humble in that I was privileged to be a part of such an ambitious undertaking that will lead to many positive and productive endeavors. We have been given a wonderful opportunity not only to change communities for the better, but also to build upon the enormous wealth of good that exists within us all. I know in my heart that we will meet the challenges placed before us with the highest level of integrity and with the utmost compassion for all of humanity."

You can find texts of these letters on our website, www.wtb.org, and in our book "Bringing Women of Faith together After 9/11." I think you would agree sisters - those of us who came together ten years ago fearfully but fearlessly envisioned the work of WTB as it has unfolded - and we continue!

If you are a long time member of WTB - please continue to bless us with your help. If you are new - we welcome you and need your help to continue finding ways to transcend the many boundaries we find as we do our unique interfaith community building work in Syracuse.

Betsy Wiggins