Ruth and I are now in our second year of co-chairing the luncheons. It was daunting at first, but as we got used to what needed doing, we really came to love it. We quickly divide up the tasks each month so we know what each one is doing.

Ruth works with John Rosette to set up the room to accommodate the number of people who RSVP, as well as ministers and guests. Sometimes there are other things going on that require different set ups. We moved the podium to the Salmon Street side of the room in order to make it more comfortable for members to refresh their drinks.

Together we come up with decoration themes, following the seasons and the Church’s theme as much as possible. We like to entice you to take the table decorations home with you for a small donation to raise funds for one of the many non-profits the church supports.

We both love working with the volunteers. This job would be impossible without you! You’re so willing to pitch in both before and after lunch. I especially like calling all of you after the luncheon for an additional thank you. Community is a huge theme in this church and we really feel it when working with the volunteers and welcoming everyone into the Buchan for the setting we’ve created.

It’s a very rewarding job and we both thoroughly enjoy doing it. It is a two-year position, so we’ll be stepping down after lunch in June. Keep this in mind if you’d like to have a great time with the generous community of the Alliance!

In Fellowship,
Kathleen Vinson and Ruth Lewellen-Dix

MEMBER IN PROFILE: Ann McKinney

Prolific traveler Ann McKinney knows her “roots hold her close” though her travels have taken her to seven continents. Iceland is her favorite country, but “Antarctica was over the top. We paddled through an iceber!” With travel buddy, peripatetic Nancy Panitch, the two also snowshoed and hiked in Patagonia to the high border between Brazil and Argentina to see Iguacu Falls. At age 61 she trekked with her daughter up to base camp at Annapurna.

At age 63 Ann signed on to the Peace Corps. Admitting some difficulties with foreign languages she said, “You decide where to send me;” they sent her to Namibia and provided training in Oshindange, a tribal language. “I lived as the natives do, one room in a mud hut.” With only a field to accommodate the necessary ablutions, she resisted nocturnal visits until one dark night; she looked up and “it was wonderful, the blackness… so dark I could see all those stars …so beautiful I decided to get up every night!” She wrote family and friends that no books were available. “When I left, the school had a library.”
**Ann McKinney, continued**

Born in Milwaukee, part of a large German Lutheran family, Ann could hardly wait to leave after high school. But, Wheaton College disappointed, so she transferred, married and began to raise a family - three children from the first marriage and one more from a second. When all her children were in school, she returned to graduate college and to earn a Masters’ in Clinical Social Work. Ann is also a licensed Alcoholism Counselor. She remained Lutheran until her children asked questions about religion, then became an Episcopalian.

Post retirement, Ann lived near lovely Ashville, N.C. Her family now included ten grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and one on the way. Roots indeed! Ann acknowledged, “I missed my kids!” The youngest, a daughter living in Portland, enticed Ann to move here to live in the ADU they provided in their home. She joined First Unitarian in 2012, the Alliance in 2013, and seeks opportunities to volunteer in our family shelter, to drive congregants to church, to care regularly for grandchildren, and more.

Grateful for her health and strong legs, and positive in spirit, Ann hikes often with two hiking groups. She continues to dream… New Zealand, maybe Tasmania? For Ann, life on the trails continues to “set her free.”

**MEMBER IN PROFILE: Sue Holmes**

Sue Holmes, new to Alliance, has stepped fearlessly into Membership Chair position. Our ever-vigilant co-president, Nancy, caught up to her recently on the trail - both are members of the Trail Club — and invited her to serve. Thank you, Sue!

She welcomed me recently to her home in NW Portland’s alphabet neighborhood where she and her husband have lived for 44 years. I followed her to their backyard garden, to the shaded path circling dozens of flower beds and leading to the chicken run at the back fence. Roosting there in cool seclusion, her hen ladies clucked contentedly while Sue checked mid-morning production.

Born in Salzburg where her father was stationed with the army, Sue returned to the U.S. to graduate high school in New Jersey and earn a sociology degree later from U. C. Berkeley. She began her nursing career serving a half year as Navy nurse in Viet Nam; she completed her long career dedicated to patients at St. Vincent in hospice care. It took Sue three years to let go of this good work. “Our tasks at this life stage may be to conquer fear,” she claims, and “to be the person you always wanted to be.”

Sue wants to continue being a spelunker! With the Willamette Grotto Club, she has explored caves all over the U.S., Europe and Central America. She generally prefers travel that is ‘off the beaten path;’ this last spring Sue floated the Colorado through the Grand Canyon. She is an active skier, biker, and hiker and soon will be on foot on the Allegheny Trail.

Sue discovered our church near the end of Marilyn Sewell’s tenure. Noting that Unitarianism embraced “enough diversity and surprise,” she felt she had found her ‘tribe’ and joined First UU in 2015. Brand new to Alliance membership, Sue is “finding community with women who start things. This church opened up a whole, new approach for sharing my talents!”

While she admits it’s time to be selling her home, she is enjoying the community she shares with her Women’s Group and with our Alliance. I said goodbye reluctantly to my generous hostess, gathered her gift of fresh eggs, and expressed silent appreciation to all the feathered or fearless ‘ladies’ who enrich my days and yours.