

Minutes of the Face-to-Face Board Meeting and Plenary—Oct. 3-8, 2015 Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association

Present: Jim Eller, Marni Harmony, Doug Gallagher, Judy Gibson, Judy S. Gillis, John Manwell, Liz McMaster, Joel Weaver, Judy Welles, John Weston

Note: Actionable items in red. Voted or approved items in bold.

Saturday, October 3, 2015

CENTERING: Jim Eller offered a Meg Barnhouse reading, Waitressing in the Sacred Kitchen.”

CHECK IN: All Board members checked in briefly.

MEETING PHILOSOPHY: Jim shared his philosophy for UURMaPA Board meetings:

- Relationships: At times we will want to focus on relating to each other; and we need to be ready to set aside our technology (laptops, tablets, iphones) to talk face to face.
- Informal style: Many decisions can be made by group consensus. We will reserve formal motions for the larger important issues of record (like budgets, policies, etc.)

LEADERSHIP LIST: The current leadership list was circulated, and Board members checked the data and added info on home and cell phones. Jim suggested some rearrangement of listings, and possibly two additions may be made (UUA Board Liaison – see below; and MA Resident Agent). *Judy G will send updates to Marcia Olsen with request for reformat..*

ORIENTATION: Judy G reviewed two items Board members to provide some background:

- A short history document, compiled from Liz Strong's 2012 history. (attached)
- A quick overview of the contents of our Operating Procedures, which can be found on the website under Governance. This is a living document, updated regularly by the Secretary as the Board creates new guidelines. A useful reference for all as questions come up.

AGENDA: As a working document, was accepted as presented. A flip chart worked as “parking lot” for items that arose and needed consideration or final review and approval..

Sunday, October 4, 2015

CENTERING: Marni offered some music for meditation.

MINUTES: Judy G summarized the minutes from Sept.1, 2015 ZOOM meeting, **Minutes were approved.** Members agreed that they like the following schedule: a) receiving draft minutes soon after a meeting for review and suggested changes; b) receiving same minutes as corrected shortly before the next meeting as reminder and for approval. All approved minutes are posted on the website for future reference. From now on, line numbers will be retained on approved minutes as an aid to reference.

MEETING SCHEDULE: Jim reviewed the meeting schedule for the next year: first Tuesdays, 3:00-4:30 Central time, on ZOOM. Exceptions: March (face-to-face in Santa Barbara), and maybe July.

ZOOM BOARD MEETINGS: *Marni will assume Board member host responsibilities from Jim. Jim will go over how to initiate Zoom sessions with Marni, Doug, and Liz (use with Peer groups).* Members discussed the value of moving to use of a ZOOM Room (cost: \$500), rather than getting 2-3 individual accounts (\$10/month, \$120/year).

ANNUAL WORK CALENDAR: Members reviewed copies of the most recent revision (8/4/15) for additions, changes, or assignments.

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- November – *Marni will work on scheduling GA UURMaPA luncheon.*
- December – *Marni will schedule Collegial Conversation for Ministry Days; Jim will write a Winter/New Years (instead of Christmas) letter to be posted to members on Announce.*
- February – *Marni will create and work with Creative Sageing Award Committee*
Changes to Board Work Calendar will be made by Secretary and attached with these minutes.

UUA BOARD MEETINGS: Jim asked if we might want to re-institute the practice of having a UURMaPA Board member attend/monitor UUA Board meetings for issues that involve us. All meetings are now streamed, and one does not have to attend in person. Board members agreed that it would be valuable to have someone check in periodically on Board actions. Members agreed that UUMA Board functions are transparent and relational and do not need a monitor. *Jim will seek a past president or Board member who might serve in the new off-Board appointment of UUA Board Liaison*

TREASURER'S MONTHLY REPORT AND 2016 DRAFT BUDGET: Joel distributed the financial report for September 30 (attached) and it was accepted. The preliminary budget for fiscal (calendar) year 2016 was reviewed and discussed.

- Members decided it is clearer if conference registration costs for the nine Board members that are paid by UURMaPA are separated from Scholarships (renamed Subsidies) line item, showing them instead under Board Expenses. Joel clarified that registration fees donated back by Board members are shown as Member Donations.
- The considerable expense of holding two face-to-face meetings a year was reviewed, pros and cons discussed, and the consensus was to stay with 2 meetings and consider it an investment of our funds to better serve our membership.
- The budgeted amount for Caring Network was increased to \$2500 to cover support funds for Area Coordinators and expected \$50 donations to honor deceased members.
- Realizing that our spending decisions will result in a deficit budget, Jim noted that raising more money from member donations, and looking into possibilities for project grants by the UU Funding Program are priorities this year.

The Treasurer's monthly report is attached with these minutes.

Joel will amend the budget for a vote at the end of the Board meetings.

CONFERENCES:

Fall Conferences – Attleboro...or other place in 2017?

Board discussion included these points: present conference has 72 registered, half again as many as any prior conferences (avg 38-58) LaSalette, which has hosted UURMaPA for more than 20 years, has been incredibly responsive to needs, including last-minute increase in lodging, at extremely reasonable cost. They say the center can accommodate up to 75-80 overnight, but it is very cozy. Other options considered in the past have cost at least double. We would need at least a 50% increase in registration cost to change sites. Reserving for next year with LaSalette can wait a month or so, requires only a \$500 deposit.

(Late addendum by Secretary 10/26/15 – Joel moved ahead following this conference to reserve LaSalette for Oct. 3-6, 2016 with Board meeting Oct. 1-3, 2016)

The Board recommended that *John Manwell work with a search committee to research other site options that can work with 70-80 registrants.* Ginger Luke, Fall conference coordinator for next year, should be included. Several members' names were suggested for this committee, most of whom are attending this conference. Various Board members agreed to talk with these folks, and suggest that they gather at one table for lunch on Tuesday or other time for a preliminary discussion..

Winter/Spring Conference – Santa Barbara 2016

Report from Registrar Ken Collier is that there are 44 registrations as of now, which probably include Board members. We are hoping for 50, and the advertised “drop dead” deadline is October 29 in Elderberries and Announce. Members agreed that the internal

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consequences of the deadline – we must pay some amount for all reserved space regardless of registration – should not force an end to accepting registrations. Board consensus on a revised message: **“Registration has been extended! Don't miss this chance to escape the cold, visit beautiful Santa Barbara. Come play! Etc.”** *John Manwell will contact the conference coordinators* – we want to send out a new positive message to membership. Keep encouraging people to sign up to the limits of the facility or coordinators' deadline. *Then we should send out a new message (Oct Elderberries- Judy W, Announce reprise – Judy G)*
Jim asked *each Board member to think who they know and do some personal contacts to invite them to register for the conference*. Members present committed to phone 4-5 people combined.

(Late addendum by Secretary 10/26/15 : Santa Barbara conference registration had filled all double rooms as of October 19, had a few singles left, and had started a wait list.)

Winter/Spring Conference – Orlando, 2017

The Board was in favor of scheduling another conference in Orlando at the same retreat center as last spring, preferably early March, option of 2 or 3 nights. **Marni agreed to take the lead again in setting up the conference, and will explore dates, costs, and arrangement options.** Focus topics were discussed, and members agreed to choose something that might appeal to partners as well as ministers – zeroed in on *the theme of climate change- very visible in Florida. Judy Welles agreed to pursue info on some possible keynote presenter's names that were suggested.*

(Late addendum by Secretary 10/26/15– Orlando site is not available for 2017 dates. Board will consider possible other sites.)

ELDERBERRIES

Joel stated that he feels that printed and mailed versions of Elderberries are the only way we reach all of our member households, as at this time not all members are online – so it is of great benefit. 700 households receive the mailing, and only 7 have opted out this year. Data on website downloads is inconclusive regarding online readership.

Marni recommended and **the Board agreed that we should mail Elderberries for another year, with a notice in every issue that tells people how they may opt out of receiving printed copies and just receive online.** It is possible that gradually over time, more and more members will prefer the electronic version, and we can phase out the mailing process and cost. (Estimate \$1.50 per household for printing and mailing.)

To try another way of collecting some readership data, *Judy W agreed to ask the Elderberries Advisory Board to do a random sampling of our members.* Judy SG suggested the idea of sending a stamped postcard to simplify and encourage the reply process.

Judy W further reported that when she asked her Advisory Board if they felt she should accept articles for Elderberries from outside sources, they saw no problem with it as long as the article is in alignment with the interests of UURMaPA and is well written.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

- UURMaPA Luncheon Jim noted that attendance was robust in 2015; half the attendees were new retirees and came as guests. Cost of lunch (\$33 pp) was subsidized for everyone else, who paid \$25 per plate. Covering guests and subsidy, the luncheon cost UURMaPA \$1200, but Board agreed it is worth it. Jim personally handled advance payments and received \$25 checks – problems arose for those reserving who wanted to pay at the door, some no-shows. Following discussion, the Board reached this consensus: **Next year's UURMaPA luncheon cost for all but guests will be \$30, still with some subsidy for any balance of cost per plate. A short registration form will be provided, and will offer the option to contribute more to help pay for guest lunches. All reservations must be prepaid. Marni will take over the luncheon arrangements in her role as VP.**

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- Collegial Conversation during Ministry Days – UURMaPA usually has a slot to present a conversation on retirement issues. *Doug and Marni will work with Jim to make this happen.*
- Program during 2016 General Assembly, Columbus, OH – The theme will be “Interfaith Outreach.” The Board agreed to skip applying for a program slot this year. Three Board members (above) confirmed that they plan to attend the coming GA.

ELECTRONIC OUTREACH

- **Peer Groups** – These were begun to serve new retirees, with one year commitment. Development has varied. Marni followed up with the 17 names signed up at UURMaPA luncheon, found 9 interested, is launching a new group. Currently there are 4 functioning groups: one meets by phone only, one by Zoom quarterly, one Zooms monthly, and the new group is starting. Setting up a partners' group may be a future option.
- **Facebook group** – An early effort by Jim did not succeed in drawing people, but he may try again to set up an UURMaPA Facebook group. Diane Miller, who is approaching retirement, has created a going group on her own, “UU Ministers Retiring” *Judy W may want to include info about these groups in Elderberires.*
- **Streaming conference programs** – An experimental effort for streaming is happening at this Attleboro conference with Judy Welle's worship service – she has asked three people to log on, then give feedback on ease of signing on, clarity, visual and audio issues. Jim reports there are currently three options: You Stream, Live Stream, and YouTube Live. They would provide another way to reach out to members. If the test is satisfactory, we may want to explore streaming keynote programs in Santa Barbara. We will need written releases from presenters. *Jim will pursue information on set up requirements, legal implications, etc. with the UUA.*

WEBSITE REPORT AND UPDATE

Judy W summarized the annual report from Webmaster Duane Fickeisen (see attached Annual Webmaster Report). She also highlighted points from the written proposal from Greg Bear of GB Media Design, which was provided to all Board members. *The following motion was offered by John Weston, seconded by Joel: **The UURMaPA Board approves this proposal to create a new, updated and responsive website using CMS Drupal – project cost \$1500. The proposal needs to be signed and returned to Greg Bear by November 1, 2015 (Jim)***

REAPPOINTMENT OF OFF-BOARD APPOINTEES

Our procedures require that all appointments are for one year. This fall meeting is the designated time for all appointees to be asked if they wish to serve for another year. Various Board members individually agreed to talk with the people in each of the following appointed positions:*(all confirmed at or following conference)*

Webmaster – *self confirmed*

Historian – Joel – *confirmed*

Clergy Obit Editor – Judy W - *confirmed*

Partner Obit Editor – Judy W – *confirmed*

Membership Coordinator - Judy W – *confirmed*

Assistant Membership Coordinator and MC successor – Judy G - *confirmed.*

CARING CONNECTIONS

Liz reported that the number of vacancies in Area Coordinators is growing, and the current number (40 areas) would expand if some of the larger areas are divided. With the thought of making the job more do-able, she has been examining three areas that currently have more than 50 members, experimenting with regrouping ideas. She and Judy SG have found that as current coordinators move, encounter health issues, take on other priorities, new invitees are reluctant to assume coordinator roles.

Board members brainstormed some suggestions:

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- Use the ten most effective coordinators as team leaders who could mentor those who are not so active – offer training and support, maybe via occasional or quarterly ZOOM meetings.
- Write up articles about the most effective Area Coordinators in the next 4 Elderberries; the rewards of the job keeping in contact with folks, etc.
- Use computer mapping to locate all current members and re-divide areas.
- Make direct connections with the members in areas without coordinators and ask if they want to build connections; offer to help setting up area ZOOM groups.

GOOD OFFICES UPDATE

Doug offered the following report: (written out to assist the Secretary!)

I took part on the UUMA training of the new Regional Resource Officers, who are to provide specialized counsel to the UUMA Good Officers in three areas: contracts/agreements, negotiated settlements, and transitions issues. My area, along with my co-convener Diane Dowgeirt, is the last. (By the way, they will be called something other than Regional Resource Officers to avoid the wrong conclusion one might reasonably reach that they attach to the UUA regions.)

We “trained” (and I put that in quotes as the RRO’s were selected because of their deep experience, knowledge and trust of their colleagues) three: Aaron Payson, Nori Rost and Barbara Child. Next steps:

- ZOOM planning meeting of the committee (Don Southworth, Diane Dowgiert, Fritz Hudson and me)
- Don will advise chapter leaders of the program
- ZOOM meetings with chapter Good Officers and the RRO’s
- Good Officer training at Ministry Days in June, looking toward a fall, 2016 launch.

DEATH NOTICES

Judy G shared a request from a recent UURMaPA widow, asking that death announcements omit names in the subject line, instead suggesting “Notice of a member’s death.” Board members considered the shock and compassion issues, but confirmed that names should continue to appear with “We will miss NAME”.

The Board also reconfirmed the policies currently in place concerning UURMaPA membership, which do not include ordained ministers not in fellowship. Death notices in these situations will remain on a case-by-case basis.

AWARDS

This year’s Unsung UURMaPAn (formerly Unsung Hero) Award will be presented during this conference plenary (formerly called business meeting) on Thursday morning.

The Creative Sage-ing Award committee will be chaired by Marni, who will secure other members. The members who served with Jim last year may be willing to continue. This award is usually presented during the GA UURMaPA luncheon.

MEETINGS WITH UUA STAFF

Members brainstormed a list of concerns to discuss with Linda Rose, Sheldon Bennett and Sarah Lammert tomorrow. (see later notes)

PERSONAL GOALS FOR THIS YEAR

Jim then asked each Board member to answer the question, “What do you hope to accomplish in the next year in your role with UURMaPA Board?” *(Summary of answers provided to Jim Eller)*

Monday, October 5, 2015

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Doug offered an opening reading.

VISIT WITH LINDA ROSE – TIAA-CREF

Linda Rose, Director of the UUA Retirement Plan, reviewed answers to common concerns. 600 congregations currently work with TIAA-CREF. Some items discussed included:

- Required minimum distributions after age 70½ may change year by year, and TIAA-CREF is available for consultation to confirm percentage..
- Tax suppression for housing expenses is available only to clergy person (not surviving partner); and is based on the lesser amount - fair market rental value of home and contents, or actual expenditures. Several ministers using Turbo-tax for filing have found filing for housing allowance confusing – *some “how to” best answers might be included in Winter Elderberries*. IRS is recently scrutinizing church housing exclusions more closely. *Liz - Area Coordinators need to get tax guides, info to use as resources, share with their contacts.*
- Annual no-cost guidance sessions for UUA plan participants are available in more than 60 offices around the country. Individual advisory reviews at no cost are available to ministers with complex planning needs and \$250,000 or more invested. Five TIAA-CREF advisors are specifically familiar with tax advantages available to retired clergy.

VISIT WITH SHELDON BENNETT – SERVICE GRATUITIES

Sheldon Bennett is the President of the Unitarian Service Pension Society, which was founded in 1907 to provide retirement income for UU ministers. USPS today makes quarterly Service Gratuity payments to UU ministers with 20 or more years of service, age 66 or over, and who apply. The number of recipients has risen significantly since 2011, and continues to rise.

Currently there are 322 recipients receiving an average payment of \$473 (range approximately \$300-\$600) Of 1876 ministers currently alive and in fellowship, 1097 are potentially eligible. 273 could become eligible next year.

Future funding is a concern: options include raising new funds, raising age of eligibility, years of service or both; reducing payment amounts. UURMaPA may offer support in a couple of ways.

- *Since two current trustees may be going off USPS Board, Jim agreed to check with some ministers who might be potential replacements.*
- Judy W indicated that two separate articles in the Fall Elderberries will focus on legacy gift opportunities to organizations that specifically address issues for retirees, including USPS..

VISIT WITH SARAH LAMMERT – MINISTRY AND FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Sarah offered several updates and addressed our questions::

- Ministerial Fellowship Committee – Has 6 members, Jessie King is the new chair – seem to be operating very effectively. 95% of candidates reviewed in the most recent meeting received high ratings Peer study groups have provided good support for candidates.
- In-Care Programs – one is being developed in each region, each use different models to bridge the gap between seminary and settlement. They replace the Regional Subcommittees on Candidacy.
- Economic Summit – Sarah will send us the report from this meeting - 5 study areas. Jim attended last June.
- Summer Seminary – for high school students who think they have an interest in ministry. A good program.
- Fair Compensation – formula and guidelines are under review, will be released soon..
- Survivor's Luncheon at GA – Always held on the same day as the Service of Living Tradition where deceased ministers are honored. Need to be sure it is not scheduled concurrent with UURMaPA Luncheon. Judy SG and others outlined entry difficulties and non-welcoming aspects for those attending who are not registered for GA. Sarah

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recommended official request and concerns go directly from UURMaPA to GA Planning Committee.

- Minister on Loan program – We suggested possibility of re-activation of some version of this historic program (active in '60s, maybe '70s). Retired ministers could be matched with congregations needing 6 weeks of service. Sarah suggested talking with Scott Tayler at UUA.
- Intent to Retire form – We suggested collecting more information about partners on this form. Sarah directed us to Julie Shaw.

Sarah also offered brief comments regarding: trying out new flexible options with Shelter Rock and Wellspring congregations; the transition to Regions still in process; modest decline in UU membership (not as severe as some other denominations); loss of trans and gender queer ministers; lack of complaints re: sexual misconduct in the last 2 years.

WRAP-UP AND DECISIONS

The Board took action on the following items listed in our “parking lot”:

The UURMaPA Statement of Purpose - Amendment (to better reflect our purposes and acknowledge partnership with UUMA) was proposed by Judy W (*moved*) and Liz (*seconded*):
Guided by the purposes and principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and in partnership with the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, the purposes of this organization shall be: to enhance the well-being of retired Unitarian Universalist ministers, their life partners and surviving life partners by providing such programs and activities as may benefit them; and to serve the Unitarian Universalist movement.

The Board offered preliminary approval by majority vote. Since this will be a By-Laws amendment, the following required procedure will be followed:

- *Judy W will send the revision to UUMA Executive Director Don Southworth for his comments.*
- *The revision will be published in the coming Fall Elderberries.* Feedback and comments are to be sent to the Secretary within the following 30 days.
- *Judy G will provide a summary of comments received to the Board in its December meeting.* The Board will then vote on final approval.
- If approved, the *Secretary will then provide the amended By-Laws to the State of Massachusetts, our Resident Agent, and the Webmaster.*

General Assembly passes for surviving families – *Jim will write a letter, in consultation with Judy SG (who has a personal story to share), to all GA Planning Committee members and staff. He will be requesting a more visitor-friendly system for entry and participation for these families and other honored guests who are not registered for GA.*

Intent to Retire form – *Liz will contact Julie Shaw to request additions to the form for partners, including education, career, and retirement plans, and to offer UURMaPA's assistance if needed.*

Minister on Loan idea – Marni *moved* and Judy W *seconded*: **UURMaPA would like to re-institute a new version of the Minister on Loan program that would utilize vetted volunteer UURMaPA retired clergy to assist congregations for a six-week period.** *Marni will contact Keith Kron, and Jim will contact Scott Tayler, to present and discuss this proposal.* Joel suggested that UURMaPA might be able to loan money to fund this program, or perhaps apply for a grant.

UU Funding Program – *Liz will meet with Hillary Goodrich to explore the idea of UURMaPA applying for a grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, which is aimed at strengthening*

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Unitarian Universalist institutions and community life. Our Minister on Loan idea may be a candidate for a grant.

2016 Budget – The Board reviewed the revised budget. We acknowledged that printed membership directories get outdated quickly, and are of diminishing usefulness since the directory on the website is updated monthly. Following discussion, Liz *moved* and Marni *seconded* a motion to **approve next year's budget, minus any costs associated with printing the membership directory from projected expenditures.** *Passed. Joel will make any needed adjustments and provide revised budget to the Board.*..The Board acknowledged that the document is a deficit budget, but serves as a working guide. Our emphasis is in offering more member services, and fund raising to support these efforts is a “front burner” priority.

UURMaPA Debit Card – Joel confirmed that a debit card for our account can be provided to Marni for use in paying GA luncheon costs (close to \$5000), rather than using her personal card. We do not need to apply for a credit card for UURMaPA. Other Board members may also have access to the debit card if needed.

ZOOM Room – *Judy W will research the cost/benefits of UURMaPA using a ZOOM room rather than individual accounts for Board, Peer groups, Possible area gatherings, etc.*

Service Gratuity/Legacy donations – The Board agreed that *general articles in Elderberries should list various opportunities for legacy gifts*, including the UUMA Endowment Fund, the Unitarian Service Pension Society Endowment, the AID Fund, UURMaPA Endowment, and even other funds such as the LREDA Endowment.

Next Board meeting via ZOOM – Tuesday, November 3, 3:00 pm CST

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Gibson, Secretary

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**Minutes, UURMaPA Plenary, Wednesday October 8, 2015
LaSalette Center, Attleboro, MA**

President's Report

UURMaPA is an ever-growing organization, more so recently. Our conference registration is increasing; Santa Barbara now has 44 registered, and the keynotes hopefully will be streamed and linked to our Facebook page,

The UURMaPA web site will be updated this coming year, hopefully by the first of the new year.

Our Facebook page has little content yet — Jim will upload anything that has to do with the welfare of the organization. He is hoping for more content.

Jim will emphasize during his presidency the importance of partners.

Nominating Committee - Chris Lilly Backus

There will be an article in the upcoming *Elderberries*. All of the incumbents have agreed to stay: Secretary, Treasurer, *Elderberries* editor. John Manwell is stepping in to finish out John Weston's term.

Thanks to John Weston, and to the continuing members on the Board.

Appointed: Webmaster, Membership Coordinator, Historian

Greetings from Nancy Doughty, former chair. Current members: Chris, Bob Morriss, Doris Hunter.

Conferences - Carol Taylor, Ginger Luke, John Manwell

All but one of our cancellations for this Attleboro conference were for health issues.

As preface to the discussion about changing location, consider these factors at this site: (1) sinks in rooms, (2) two elevators, (3) LaSalette staff are cooperative, (4) private-ish bathrooms. We'll be staying here again next year, and will continue to have the "additional day" for this conference.

Accolades to Ginger. Her co-chair for next year will be Don Chery (her husband).

Ginger gave thanks for Carol's leadership. Ginger and Don will be looking for someone to co-train for the following year. Be sure to send them ideas about programming.

John Manwell: our biggest problem with LaSalette is the size/capacity. (There are already 30 retirees signed up with the UUA for this coming year — UURMaPA is *growing*.) We will continue to explore other locations to keep our options open. We'll continue to have two conferences per year, here and another to-be-determined location. Santa Barbara is set for March

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2016. We'll be in Orlando in Winter/spring 2017. Let Marni Harmony know if you have program ideas.

Unsung UURMaPAn - presented by Dick Gilbert

Area Coordinators Vern and Sue Nichols., a position also held by Rhett Baird, who received this award last year.

A great surprise! They are planning to move to Portland, OR, so this will probably be their last Attleboro Conference. "We will continue to be as active as we can in UURMaPA."

Caring Connection - Liz McMaster

Gratitude to Margi who paved the way. Judy Gillis has great ideas as a partner. We're considering how to divvy up the world differently, e.g. focusing on college towns where there may be more retired ministers.

We have 8 vacancies among coordinators: Ballou Channing, Bay Area Coastal, Colorado/Montana/Wyoming, Mass Bay Coastal, Metro New York, Pacific Northwest (Western Canada has been separated off), St. Lawrence, Northeast. We hope that if smaller cohorts are created, it will be easier for people to get together.

She named the Area Coordinators who are in attendance.

Judy Gillis is a quick study; please give us your ideas for who will look for "lost sheep in the valley." Judy said, "Things have fallen into place now that I've come here and can put faces to names. Having been a partner, I know from that angle." Tell her if there are people care-giving for people with dementia.

VP Report - Marni Harmony

Her big task is the GA luncheon (price will go up a bit to \$30), hoping for a Friday date. Creative Sageing Award is presented there.

Peer groups: we now have 3, and a 4th about to begin. She will be starting a list for people who want to be in the next group, with two facilitators waiting. These meetings are held on Zoom. Groups typically have 9-10 participants, meeting in a style similar to a covenant group, and agreeing to meet for a year. Each group sets up its own guidelines. They give an opportunity to share the activities and struggles of retirement. (Jim's comment: it's like an accountability group to help with the transition into retirement.)

Marni is on the Retirement Plan Committee, so contact her if you don't want to go to Richard or Linda.

Treasurer's Report and Budget - Joel Weaver

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We rely on the generosity of our members, and you have been generous. We have 700 families in UURMaPA, and have received contributions from about 200, so we have room to grow in the donor department. Our estimate is that we'll bring in total income of \$32K, including 1K from UUMA and the rest from member donations.

This year we'll run a deficit of about \$8K. We're trying to improve our outreach to members, so we are subsidizing the costs of events. We're committed to having a second conference per year, which helps to explain the deficit. Remember how much you enjoyed this conference when you're putting together your list of gift recipients. ("Add a zero.")

UUMA Update - Dick Gilbert and Doug Gallager

Review of collegial conversations held at Ministry Days.

Alicia Forde, Richard Nugent, Dick and Doug are working on a task force about preparation for retirement, similar to the workshop that Larry Peers has been presenting. Issues: do we want a continental large program, interfaith? or do we want a UU-specific program? Is there anything we want to do for spouses who don't attend these programs? What can we offer for colleagues who wouldn't attend — webinar, print materials, bibliography, chapter seminars...

Doug - When he attended Larry's workshop, he had a unique perspective as someone already retired, thinking at times, "that would have been a good thing to do." UUA will offer this for ministers 5-10 years out from retirement; we can encourage the colleagues to take advantage.

UUMA Resource Officers - To consult with and be resources for UUMA Good Officers. The three areas they will specialize in are Contracts, Negotiated Resignations, and Transitions. They have now been trained, next step will be to have consultations with chapter leaders and Good Officers, get together at G.A. next summer. We in UURMaPA can be particular resources for partners.

Could we advocate with the UUA that they include partners? Jim-We have been doing that, whereas UUMA has no sway over partners (not in covenant). Chris and Jan Sammons say they are within our communion.

Rites of Retirement - Dick Gilbert and Judy Welles

We are working on a new UURMaPA publication (probably downloadable from our web site) which will be about rituals and rites of retirement. Our current (vague) plan is to cover six areas: (1) the letter announcing resignation; (2) the sermon immediately after the letter; (3) the party saying goodbye to the minister; (4) the party saying goodbye to the minister's partner; (5) how to say goodbye to the children; (6) the last sermon.

We will be asking in a variety of venues for good examples of anything in the above categories. Please come to us if you have examples, or if you know of a colleague who might share a good example.

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Elderberries Report - Judy Welles

I'm still having fun. But I'm always looking for ideas of what to print, so please come to me with your ideas. I'm especially looking for good ideas of who might write the Partners Column.

Other

Elizabeth Strong, Historian - She has data, but wants stories (hard copy preferred). If you have copies of the Order of Service from the Service of the Living Tradition (any year), send them to her for our archives. Also welcome would be stories of our experiences with UURMaPA.

Rachel Tedesco - MA Congregational Charitable Society. Long history before splits (UU/ cong and MA/ME). Fund for retired ministers and partners who served in MA or ME or their families. They have \$\$ in their endowment, and are looking for applicants. Those go to Glen Snowden.

Carol Taylor - We will be giving the staff a tip of \$270 [collected during the meeting].

Closing remarks - Jim Eller

Storytelling, a powerful human experience. We have life experiences in common. They are mostly true, and such fun to tell! What a time we have lived through! It's really good to be on the journey together.

Time is moving so fast that the same time next year feels like next week. I want to be on the journey with YOU.

Judy Welles, Recorder

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Orientation to UURMaPA – an historical perspective
Judy Gibson, Secretary – for the Board meeting prior to 2015 Attleboro
Conference

The Retired Minister's Association was begun in 1985 with a Grant from the Veatch Program via the UUA Grants Panel. There were 59 members the first year and 70 their second year.

“There was a coming together in 1983 at the General Assembly in Vancouver, WA, when eight retired ministers met and began promoting the concern. Finally, in the spring of 1985 the Council on Church Staff Finances arranged a meeting with Harold Hadley, William Gardner, Walter Kring, Arnold and Horace Westwood to make plans for a conference. All retirees and their spouses were invited to a two-day gathering at Petersham, MA and the response from those near enough to make attendance possible was immediate and enthusiastic.....

“It was a great success. Perhaps the greatest attraction was a chance to meet again with old friends or to feel involved in the movement to which, in most cases, a life-time of effort had been given; but in the process the needs and hurts of retired folk came to the surface and made evident the need for some representative and serving organization.

“Much was accomplished in less time than most would have dared to anticipate. Before two days were done, By-Laws had been adopted, officers elected and a Newsletter authorized. We trust this will be followed by a minimum of four (conferences) each year to help knit us more closely together.” *(from Elderberries article by Albert Q Perry, 1985)*

The Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers Association became the Retired Ministers and Partners Association on 1995 and first named as such in the May 1996 *Elderberries* issue.

UURMaPa was recognized as a 501 (c) (3) organization by the IRS in 2004.

Currently (2012) UURMaPa is organized into Four Conferences that hold meetings around the country each year: Northeast – meeting in Massachusetts; Pan-South – meeting in Florida or Louisiana; Mid-West – meeting in Michigan, Western, meeting in California. There is a Caring Network for each district with one or two Caring Person(s); a liaison to the Unitarian Universalist Association's financial committees and the publication of a directory and the *Elderberries* newsletter.

We are supported financially by the contributions from members as there are no dues required for membership.

Excerpted from Elizabeth Strong's History of UURMaPA, October 2012

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UURMAPA WORK CALENDAR (Board President's Guidelines) – July thru June

July-August

- Conference meeting via ZOOM as needed
- Elderberries deadline – July 15
- Unsung UURMaPAn – consideration of nominees – announce winner at Fall Conf.

September

- Conference meeting via ZOOM
- Planning for In-person Board Meeting
- Initial budget draft for next calendar year
- Draft fundraising letter

October

- Fall Board meeting at Fall conference
- Fundraising Letter goes out within the first four days of the month
- Adopt budget for next calendar year
- Receipts, bills, and follow-up from Board meeting
- Receipts, follow-up from NE Conference
- Elderberries deadline – October 15

November

- Conference meeting via ZOOM - agenda, reminders, reports
- Make sure Vice President or another Board member sends in initial request for GA space for UURMaPA luncheon – Contact the Meeting Planner. Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly and Conference Services. (617) 948-4208.

December

- Conference meeting via ZOOM
- Vice President or other Board member contacts the UUMA Executive Director (executivedirector@uuma.org) requesting Collegial Conversation spot at Ministry Day
- Write New Years greeting letter for UURMAPA Announce

January

- Conference meeting via ZOOM
- Check in with Nominating Committee on their progress
- Check in with Conference Coordinator on progress of plans for Conferences
- Elderberries deadline – January 15

February

- Conference meeting via ZOOM
- Vice President creates Committee; provides update for Creative Sageing Award Committee
- GA plans - should receive notification of hotel for luncheon
- Year-end financial report for previous year

March

- Conference meeting via ZOOM
- Preliminary plans for collegial conversation on Ministry Day
- Draft spring Appeal Letter for Board review, to be mailed in April

April

1. Conference meeting via ZOOM
2. GA - luncheon menu selected; plans for Collegial Conversation and which UURMaPA Board

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member(s) will attend GA

3. In April or early May you will hear from the UUA Director of Ministries and Faith Development (617 948-6407) re: surviving families' luncheon and plans for Service of the Living Tradition
4. Check with Ministry and Faith Development staff as to whether there will be a Memorial Booth at GA and if they want UURMaPA help in staffing it
5. Elderberries deadline – April 15

May

- Conference meeting via ZOOM
- Finalize plans for Collegial Conversation
- GA Prep:
- E-mail invitation in early to mid May to new retirees sent out (get list from Ministries & Faith Development Staff Group); someone on Board needs to receive responses from new retirees
- Invite the following officials to the UURMaPA Luncheon at GA: Director of Ministries and Faith Development, The Retirement Plan Director, Office of Church Staff Finances (617) 948-4265 The Director of Church Staff Finances
- Invite Creative Sageing Award to UURMaPA GA luncheon
- Invite new Board members to participate in June Board Conference call
-

June

- Conference meeting via ZOOM
- Finalize GA arrangements for Luncheon, Memorial Booth, Service of the Living Tradition (UURMaPA Board member to sit with surviving families)
- Send out on UURMaPA announce an invitation to UURMaPA GA events including helping with Memorial Booth
- Develop brief program for luncheon:
 - UURMaPA report during luncheon,
 - Sageing Award announced,
 - welcome new retirees,
 - UUA staff from Ministries and Faith Development and Church Staff Finances speak briefly
- GA - UUMA Day, Survivors' Luncheon, SOLT, UURMaPA luncheon, Memorial Booth

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**Treasurer's Report for October 3, 2015 Meeting
By Joel Weaver**

UURMaPA Finances – September 30, 2015

Ending Account Balances August 31, 2015

Endowment	\$20,575
Money Market	30,317
Checking	<u>31,706</u>
Total	\$82,598

Cash Flow September, 1 – 30, 2015

Member Contributions	\$ 645	
Santa Barbara Conference Fees	5,250	
Attleboro Conference Fees	<u>2,815</u>	
Total Income	\$8,710	
Elderberries Publication	(\$1,212)	
Attleboro Conference Fee Refunds	(750)	Susan Weston, Ron & Judy Marcy
Attleboro Conference Expense	(625)	Additional bus for UUA HQ trip
Printing of Note Cards & Labels	(338)	
Attleboro Scholarship	(100)	
Caring Network	<u>(50)</u>	
Total Expense	(\$3,075)	
Net Cash Flow	\$5,635	

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Report of the UURMaPA Webmaster
October 2015

My vision for the near term is to contract with a web designer to develop a fresh and “responsive” website that will be more accessible and attractive.

A “responsive” site is one that recognizes the device and operating system from which it the site is accessed and adjusts accordingly. Over half of our hits come from Windows operating systems, with Apple’s Mac systems in second place. About 5% (and a growing number) come from Apple IOS systems, i.e., iPhones and iPads, and a small number from BlackBerries. I don’t have separate data for Android devices. Goggle has announced that their search results sent to a mobile device will only show links to sites that are responsive. You have likely noticed recent changes in many websites with drop-down menus rather than tabs. That’s part of making them more usable from mobile devices (a long row of tabs becomes hard to read because the type has to be small to fit across the smaller screens, or with larger font size, you must scroll across the page to see them all). Our current site is not responsive and fails Google’s tests of that miserably.

I’ll be sending you — for your consideration at your October meeting — a proposal from Greg Bear (who designed our logo) for the web development work and hope you will approve it. After quite a bit of conversation about our needs and testing various platforms, Greg has proposed using Drupal as the platform. This is a system that is more readily changed than our current site design (for which I cannot change the basic template and headers and tabs). The basic software is in the public domain (free). Greg has suggested, and I am in full agreement, that he do the basic design and “we” (your webmaster, that is) prepare and upload the content. Richard Speck, who is a Drupal user, has affirmed this path as appropriate to our needs.

The file system on our server is currently a real mess, in part because it has taken me a while to figure out how it all works, and I look forward to the opportunity to delete unused files and create a more orderly system. That’s all invisible to the user, but will make maintenance much easier.

The upgrade will represent a significant increase in effort to launch, but once it is in place, I am hopeful that it will be easier to maintain. Currently I spend just a few hours a month on the job.

As always, I invite your comments, updates, and corrections to the site. Please do occasionally review the page(s) for your area of responsibility to be sure they are up to date.

Some additional information follows.

Visits to uurmapa.org

We continue to have around 700 unique visitors to our website a month (around 30 to 50 a day). They view an average of two pages on the site for each visit. There is not much variation from month to month or by day of the week.

(These numbers continue to be skewed by accidental visitors from the Ukraine, where there is apparently a popular site with a similar name — almost a quarter of the page visits are from the Ukraine, and I imagine they don’t stay long and only visit the home page.)

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Downloads of Elderberries

Here are some data from the statistics our server provider offers on downloads.

We removed password protection for downloading Elderberries (including the current issue and the archival ones) with the Spring 2014 issue. And we began mailing (through the post office) to all households that had not opted out of mailing with the Fall 2014 issue. The data do not permit a conclusion with any statistical relevance about the impact of mailing as there are only two issues without password protection and before mailings began to all members. And in addition, starting in the spring of 2014 back issues could also be downloaded without a password.

It is, however, clear that the number of downloads of all issues increased substantially with removal of the password. Comparing downloads in the first year of publication, they jumped from around 130 per issue to over 800 downloads per issue on average. I find it interesting that after removal of the password the back issues were downloaded much more often than they were when they were first published (while the password was still in effect).

I consider the Spring 2014 to be an anomaly (I can't explain the over three-fold higher number of downloads for that issue compared to those before and after). I don't think any conclusions can be drawn about the effect of mailing from these data. The question you probably want to have an answer to is whether or not there has been a substantial increase in readership, and these numbers just don't (and can't) address that.

Other Downloads

The Retirement Guide has been downloaded 608 times so far in 2015, which is on pace with prior years. The Right Relations joint task force report remains a frequently accessed document with 355 downloads this year so far, compared to 482 in 2013 and 423 in 2014. The Membership Directory has been downloaded 253 times, which is similar to prior years.

UUMPs Documents

We continue to host some password-protected documents on behalf of UUMPs (the partners of UU ministers group, regardless of the minister-partner's retirement status). Those were accessed 24 times so far this year. The cost of doing this is essentially zero and it requires almost no effort on our part now that the page and links are set up.

e-Mail Forwarding

I can easily set up e-mail forwarding addresses at no additional cost. We have several of them already. Let me know if you wish to have any additions or when you have corrections. Currently we have:

e-mail sent to:	forwards to:
board@uurmapa.org	all board members
caring@uurmapa.org	Liz McMaster
elderberries@uurmapa.org	Judy Welles
membership@uurmapa.org	Marcia Olsen
newsletter@uurmapa.org	Judy Welles
president@uurmapa.org	Jim Eller
secretary@uurmapa.org	Judy Gibson
treasurer@uurmapa.org	Joel Weaver
uumps@uurmapa.org	Chris Backus and Liz Hill

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Elderberries Downloads

Elderberries Issue	Number of Downloads in Given Year			Total Downloads
	2013	2014	2015*	
Winter 2013	86	129	219	
Spring 2013	181	373	464	
Summer 2013	179	463	412	
Fall 2013	248	591	251	
Winter 2014	—	495	643	
Spring 2014	—	2,510	1,110	
Summer 2014	—	443	244	
Fall 2014	—	532	505	
Winter 2015	—	—	573	
Spring 2015	—	—	625	
Summer 2015	—	—	456	

*Through 9/28/15

uurmapa@uurmapa.org
webmaster@uurmapa.org

Marcia Olsen
 Duane Fickeisen

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Server

I continue to be happy with our current server provider, BlueHost. They offer an extensive suite of software for site management and good technical support. They seem to be robust with very few outages. I have been aware of only very occasional (once a year?) planned outages in the wee hours of the morning for maintenance and upgrades. The cost for their services is around \$150/year and includes the server that stores our website and related files and backups, our domain name registration, and the e-mail forwarding services.

Webmaster Tenure

I am in my fourth year as your webmaster and have agreed to continue for two more years after this one.

Submitted by Duane Fickeisen, Webmaster