

**Unitarian Universalist
Retired Ministers
and Partners
Association**

August 1999

An Association of retired Unitarian Universalist ministers, their life partners,
and the surviving partners of deceased Unitarian Universalist ministers

Volume XIV

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1999-2000

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ELDERBERRIES

Number 4

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From Your Editor

We seem to be in the Doldrums this summer; maybe it's the heat. I don't have a lot of organizational material this time, so there is enough space to print the personal stuff you have sent. Send more! The printed page is voracious and never satisfied!

I'm especially glad to print a report on the Western Conference; every year, Roy Ockert labors to send me a complete report, but I never seem to have the space for it. It's abridged, and the type on this page is small, but it's printed.

First, a *mea culpa*. Last issue, your editor commented as follows:

"Sadly, one of our brethren, **Nick Cardell**, is, at this time, serving a six month sentence in a Federal prison for his involvement in a protest march at the School of the Americas (SOA)"

Mrs. Geezer, after reading this, said scornfully, "Sad?! We should be proud!"

And then! In a similar vein, a missive from **Carol Brody**:

"The choice of words regarding **Nick Cardell's** activities bothered me. We might be concerned, upset, even worried but not sad. We could also be proud, admiring and appreciative. What I feel sad about is how few of us are reported as active for issues of social justice."

I guess I really missed the point on this one. But Carol, and others, read on!

Larry Hamby

1999 UURMAPA WEST CONFERENCE

30 retired ministers and partners attended the 8th conference of the Western Section of UURMAPA at the Marianist Retreat and Conference Center, Cupertino, CA.

UURMAPA President **Bill DeWolfe** opened the conference, followed by "check-in" statements by the conferees.

Worship services were conducted by **Betty Pingel, Alice Blair Wesley and Joyce H. Smith. Walter Royal Jones** analyzed some of the principles of the UUA bylaws. The group broke into four groups, then reported "What Do We Believe."

Tuesday and Wednesday, **Ken Helms** presented, interactively, "Memory, How It Works and Sometimes Doesn't." A really interesting program.

Tuesday evening **Dick Henry** discussed the book he has been working on, and the trials, tribulations and adventures in it: "Norbert Fabian Capek: A Spiritual Journey" \$20 from the UUA Bookstore at Beacon Street.

Ralph Mero, UUA Church Staff Finances, reported on the financial situation of members and partners, pointing to two sources of funds: financial aid grants available from him and continuing education grants available from Ministerial Development Director **David Hubner** for the sort of program presented at this conference

Wednesday evening was enlivened by the music, poetry and stories of **Ric and Billie Barbara Masten**. We adopted a resolution concerning Social Security and Medicare which points out that raising the Social Security retirement and Medicare eligibility ages to 67 means that most black men will not live long enough to receive either benefit, that Social Security provides 40% of the income of retirees, and that 37% of older women living alone rely on Social Security for at least 90% of their income.

A resolution entitled "Peace Power," calling for the establishment of a United Nations Police Force composed of volunteers to replace US and other national forces policing troubled areas, was tabled and may be raised again next year

CARING NETWORK NEWS

Here's the truth about your new contact chairperson:

I already missed my first deadline for Elderberries -- by 24 hours (Fear Not, Doe; this issue is late, late, late: Editor).

I also have not conquered the address database software but Ginny Crane and Larry Hamby are hand-holding me by via e-mail. What a team!

The wonderful Caring Network's Contact People are all new to me, but according to Ginny's last message to us, we have some brand new people to welcome: **Mary** and **Al Thelander** have accepted the Pacific Central, Non-Bay area from **Margaret** and **Ted Webb**; **Ginny Crane** has recaptured her former title as Contact Person for the Pacific Southwest, Southern California and thanks **Cliff** and **Helen Gordon** for their 4 years of service there while she served on the UURMAPA board; **Libbie Stoddard** has accepted the St. Lawrence, U.S. area from **Harry Thor**; and **Shirley Hadley** has turned over Metro-New York to **Bob Hemstreet** who was formerly her co-contact person. Activate the applause meter for them all, past and present, for we sincerely appreciate their past and future commitments to UURMAPA.

I have this to say to **Helen Dick** and **Ginny Crane**: You've done a super job getting this contact network organized. Thanks Plus,

Doe Lockwood, Chair

Some West Coast Caring Network Contact Persons



From left to right:
Guy Meyer,
Roy Jones,
Roy Ockert,
Ginny Crane,
Ray Manker,
Gretchen Manker

Next Elderberries Deadline
October 15, 1999

LETTERS AND PERSONAL HAPPENINGS

When **Barbara Kulcher** retired recently, her successor was the chaplain working part time at the Brantford, Ontario jail. She took his job, and has continued to work there part time. The jail is being closed. She is looking for a new position, perhaps in another jail quarter time.

From **John Wilkes Booth**:

"I hit 87 on August 7th. Just back from Canada where I enjoyed a reunion with year 1934 grads at McMaster University. Only four of us made it out of c. 50 still believed to be alive.

From **Charles Eddis**, a Caring Network Contact, who always sends good information.

"**Julia Cairns** is 80, still driving more than around the block, just attended her granddaughter's college graduation. She is in fine shape, but wondering if she might stop driving her tractor which she uses to cut the one acre of grass on her property.

"**Helen Klassen** is in good health too, getting over her husband's death (**Stewart Moore**) 18 months ago. She is working on his unpublished writings. Will publish them on the Internet, if nowhere else is found.

"I was with **Fred Cappuccino** at the Canadian Unitarian Council meetings in Toronto two weeks ago. He was in fine form. **Bonnie** was in India touring her orphanages.

"I talked to **Chris and Pat Raible** in Creemore in April; they were busy running their bookstore."

Jim and Jane Hunt "have been living in Raleigh NC since 1968, since Crane Theological School closed, ending my professional ministerial career. I taught religion (or tried to) at Shaw University until retiring finally in 1998. I am now writing a book on Gandhi in South Africa: *Gandhi at Tolstoy Farm*. This will be my fourth book on Gandhi. My special area of interest is Gandhi outside of India: UK and S. Africa sometimes. My books are published in India and have been distributed mainly to research libraries, where they can be found by other scholars, which satisfies me.

This quest has taken us to UK, India, and SA several times, sometimes on grants and sometimes on self-granted expeditions. My principal UU activities are Collegium from its beginning, the Raleigh UU Fellowship, partner church in Iszlo Transylvania (haven't been there), and the experience of a search committee this past year. It's nice to hear of old friends in *Elderberries*."

Al Niles: "As I approach the 60th anniversary of my ordination I find the name *Elderberries* more and more appropriate. To underscore my status the recent mailing from the nominating committee carried two names as members.

"**Christine McKenny Wetzel** was one of four members of the youth group at the Universalist Church in Auburn, Maine, I took to St. Lawrence University and the Theological School in the early 40s.

"**John Cummins** became a voluntary assistant at the church when he was a student at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine.

Now, THEY'VE reached the age of retirement. WOW!"

MORE LETTERS AND PERSONAL HAPPENINGS

The following statement was made to Judge William Lyons in Manchester, NH, District Court by **David Van Strien**. He was one of the "Footlocker Eight," a group arrested at the Mall of New Hampshire in April of 1998 as they were protesting conditions in overseas factories that produce goods for Nike, Disney and J. C. Penney. They were found guilty of criminal trespass, fined \$117 and given a 30-day suspended jail sentence which will be appealed.

"Judge you have been very gracious in your dealing with us. For that I would like to express my thanks and appreciation. But you have deprived us of a defense against the charges. You have decreed that we cannot use either the "free speech" or the "competing harms" defense. By doing so, you have left us naked before the law — so the guilty verdict was inevitable.

"But, judge, I want you to know, and I want the prosecutor to know, that I do not feel guilty. I do not feel like a criminal.

"In fact, I feel that I, and the others, behaved in the best American tradition. In a free' and democratic society, it is essential for the citizens to have the right to discuss the issues of the day with other citizens *when they gather together in public*. That is what we did, and that is no crime.

"I don't wish to take up your time by reviewing the issues. The sweatshop system is an inhuman and unjust system that can be compared to the evils of slavery. We have a right and a duty to discuss this with our compatriots. In a free society, that is how peaceful social change and advance are made. This ability to publicly exchange ideas with others where they meet in public is the life blood of a free society. Your guilty verdict does not change that fact. With all due respect, I want you to know that I affirm that basic American and New Hampshire principle."

From **Bob Bath**:

"Ever since I first met 'liberal' religion in Toronto while doing postgraduate study in philosophy my notion of 'ministry' had the adjective 'teaching' in it.

"Later, several of my congregations conveniently made it possible for me to do some teaching at nearby colleges. Finally, in the 60's, while minister of or churches in both Jamestown and later Dunkirk, NY, I was able to teach a full curriculum at a local SUNY. Serving these two congregations while teaching were the most fulfilling years of my ministry. There was no institutional friction noticeable to me. I was daily grateful to each church. The congregations in turn were alive and progressive and my college work was fruitful and appreciated as a 'citation' from the President, on my retirement, confirmed.

"I have been lucky and happy doing what I love: whether in the pulpit or at a lectern.

"Recently, our children and grandchildren came to Maine to celebrate Phyllis' 89th and my 90th birthday and our 66 years of partnership.

"In spite of hip and elbow repairs and arthritis and being run off the turnpike by a truck which totaled our car, Phyllis and I -- with aches and pains and with Advil and aspirin -- live daily with gratitude and gladness. Religion can make sense ... the discipline of philosophy can save and humanize life."

WOW!! Do We Write Books!!

Rescuing Jesus from His Friends

written by Raymond Pontier and published by Sir Vetus Books, is a collage of ideas and thoughts coming out of a ministry of more than fifty years in first, the Reformed Church and then, in Unitarian Universalist churches. The story of his transition to Unitarian Universalism is told, as well as commentaries on such cutting edge issues as abortion rights, homosexuality, racism, and militarism, adversity, death and making ethical decisions.

To Order, send \$10.00 plus \$1.50 for shipping to:

Raymond J. Pontier
1112 West Beacon Road, Lot 43
Lakeland, FL, 338303

Seven Sons: Millionaires and Vagabonds

written by Theodore A. Webb tells the stories of seven brothers from Maine. This historical biography follows the lives of the Washburn brothers, sons of the Martha Washburn and her husband, Israel, and tells the story of the lives of the Washburn men, each of whom played significant roles in the growth and change of the U.S. during the 19th Century.

The brothers served as Major General and Navy Lieutenant in the Civil War, performed ambassadorial duties in France during the Franco-Prussian War and in Paraguay during a hateful dictatorial regime, and enjoyed numerous political successes, including performing influential roles in the elections of Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant to the U.S. Presidency. They enjoyed great wealth, adventure, and success in the political arena.

Ted has invested 20 years of research into producing more than a personal biography: it examines the U.S. in the 19th Century through the stories of men who altered the face of the country.

Also available directly from the author; a short version of the Washburn story on CD, priced at \$15 US.

Keys to Magic's Inner World.

This is John Nichols Booth's 16th book and can be purchased directly from him. (He sent a photograph of him with David Copperfield, but it wouldn't reproduce and couldn't be printed: Ed.)

John Nichols Booth
12032 Montecito Road
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Upper Midwest Conference
Madison, Wisconsin
(Details in the last issue of *Elderberries*)
Max or Carolyn Gaebler
1212 Dartmouth Rd., Madison, WI 53705
608.238.4663

DEATHS

Karl A. Bach

May 11, 1999

(Surviving Partner: Margaret Avedovech Bach)

Eva Bush

Deceased Partner: Wallace Bush

Lorena Cole

December, 1998

Deceased Partner: Walton E. Cole

Aleen Hershey

Deceased Partner: John Hershey

Phillip Pennington

June 24, 1999.

Surviving Partner: Harriet Dexter Pennington

Laura Perkins

December 31, 1998

Theodore R. Smith, Jr.

May 29, 1999

Surviving Partner: Nina Morin Smith

**The Northeast Conference
LaSalette Center for Christian Living
Attleboro, Massachusetts
October 5, 6, 7, 1999**

Theme of the conference is "Transitions" — highlighting our relations with former churches

Main speaker Tuesday is Rev. Kim Beach with videos on "Parables of James Luther Adams".

Everyone is asked to bring the best humorous story or an anecdote of the year, and we'll also have sing-along in the late evenings.

Registration: \$120.00

Registrar: Iska Cole

36 Clifford Road, Edgecomb, Maine 04556

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(The following letter recently appeared in the *New York Times* and gives the theists among us a chance to make a million dollars. Have at it, Colleagues! He refers to an interesting website and I recommend visiting it. Editor))

Regarding the conflict between religion and science ("God and Physics"), the discussion neglects a basic premise of scientific proof: empirical evidence is necessary to demonstrate causality. And, extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof. The "god hypothesis" — claims of a nonphysical god-person exerting a physical influence in countervailing the laws of nature — has never met the standards of scientific verification. Anyone with such evidence — or claiming to possess psychic, supernatural or paranormal ability — is eligible for a reward of more than \$1 million that is being offered by the Randi Educational Foundation (www.randi.org). (Dr. Richard N. Feil, Mansfield, PA)

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Green Valley Arizona is now in the process of working with the Settlement Office of UUA in an attempt to locate a UU minister to move to Green Valley and work year round (with appropriate time for vacation) on a half time basis. We would like to be able to locate a quality candidate and complete settlement around the first of the year. If you would like more information please contact John Weston, UUA, or you may write the congregation at Box 925 Green Valley, AZ. 85614 or call Bill Kephart at 520.648.3902.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST RETIRED MINISTERS AND PARTNERS ASSOCIATION

c/o L. M. HAMBY

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Forwarding and Address Correction Requested