

Elderberries

The Newsletter of the

Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association

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Elderberries is published quarterly in November, February, May, and August. Deadline for submitting material is the fifteenth of the month preceding publication.

Material for publication should be sent to Ed Lane (address at the left of this page).

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From Your President

Our recent Executive Committee meeting occupied us with the usual ongoing concerns, but also a bit more. We were concerned, to be sure, about aid to those retired, our membership and finances, our regional conferences, and our programs for General Assembly. What was different was that we spent a good amount of time striving to expand our horizons about what UURMAPA might be.

We discussed how we might preserve through oral histories the magnificent treasure of our membership experience with ministry and ministries. We wrestled with how we might make our Caring Network reach out in new ways. We mused about educational travel programs (e.g. Elderhostel) that we might launch on our own. We chatted about ways in which we might open dialogue about the retirement experience and learn what the literature has to teach us about being retired. Our brainstorming knew no bounds and many novel and significant possibilities were evoked.

We did not, however, just dream and then return to reality. We set in motion several ways to explore further some of our wider options. We sensed a common agreement that with the vast expansion expected in our numbers in the coming decades we should expand UURMAPA's efforts into new fields of endeavor. We hope also that such a widened program scope will attract more among us into greater participation and activity in our group.

The Executive Committee views with alarm preliminary data which suggests that many approaching retirement (or already retired) from active ministry will be living in abject poverty. We believe this is a matter for common concern throughout our movement. Therefore, we will embark on an effort to learn what resources could be utilized to study more fully what will be the likely economic condition of retired ministers in coming decades. Should the results of this study be as dire as seems likely, we will then embark on a campaign to educate the UU movement to this disgrace and to find appropriate actions to ameliorate this economic crisis among retired clergy.

If you have thoughts about new programs for UURMAPA I would be delighted to hear from you. My address until June 30, 2002 is: 216 East Argonne Drive, Kirkwood, MO 63122 - peter@raible.com.

Peter Raible
President

In Memoriam

Theodore Guild died April 19, 2001. Surviving partner, The Reverend Polly Guild.

The Reverend Violet Kochendoerfer died July 22, 2001. She is survived by a brother, Ray of Grand Prairie, TX; a sister, Dorothy Blatnik of Duluth, MN.

Arnold Fields died July 25. Deceased partner, The Reverend Ann Fields.

Betty Papandrew, Died August 7, 2001. Surviving partner, The Reverend John Papandrew 10 Pollock Dr., Rye, NH 03870-2120.

The Reverend Albert Q. Perry died August 12, 2001. Surviving partner: Irene Perry, South Ridge Living Center, PO Box 388, Biddeford, ME 04005.

The Reverend Earle T. McKinney died August 16, 2001. Deceased partner: Dorothy (Pete) M. Petras McKinney. Messages to family and friends may be sent to: The Reverend Jean Wahlstrom, Allen Avenue Unitarian Universalist Church, 524 Allen Avenue, Portland, ME 04103-3704.

The Reverend Dr. Hugh Warren Weston died September 4, 2001. Surviving partner: Helen H. Weston, 4127 E. Indian School Road, Apt. 143, Phoenix, AZ 85018-5365.

Elizabeth Silliman died (date unknown). Deceased partner: The Reverend Vincent Silliman.

All of us have read and heard many touching and deeply poignant words by our colleagues and others in the aftermath of the 9/11 tragedy. Some among us lost church members and other friends on that sad day in our national history. We extend our sympathy and empathy to all of you and to all others in their grieving.

—*Editor*

The confrontation with death—
 and the reprieve from it—
 makes everything look so precious, so sacred, so beautiful,
 that I feel more strongly than ever the impulse
 to love it, to embrace it, and to let myself be overwhelmed by it.
 My river has never looked so beautiful.
 Death, and its ever present possibility, makes love,
 passionate love, more possible.

—*Abraham Maslow*

The Caring Network

Each year we publish the list of Caring Network Contact Persons. Even though there is only one change at this time we publish the entire list as a reminder. —Doe Lockwood, Chair

Charles L. Wilson joins the Caring Network, replacing Gerald Krick in part of Mass Bay. Thanks Gerald and speedy recovery! And thanks Charles for saying "yes."

Here's the entire complement of Caring Network Contacts. They want to hear from you. How are you doing? What are you doing? And, can UURMAPA or the UUA be of any help?

Dick & Lois Allen, Pacific Central, Bay Area 510 653-7347 loissong@earthlink.net

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Charles Wilson, Mass Bay/Inland 781 777-0066 cwilson@world.std.com

Robert & Jean Zoerheide, Joseph Priestley/South (410)243-5888

The Doings of Your Board

Your UURMAPA Board met October 7-9 at the La Salette Center in Attleboro, Massachusetts, preceding the Northeast Conference there. Two new board members, President Peter Raible and Vice-President Joyce Smith (succeeding Ed Harris and Jan Bowering) were welcomed to the Board. The President's column on page 2 covers some of our actions—here are others:

General Assembly 2002 in Quebec: We are planning a program on bioethics featuring Gerry Schatz and Carol Neilson. This has been approved and funded by the UUA. Other program possibilities are also being developed. We are exploring the possibility of an inexpensive hotel with van service to the convention center and in which we could also have a UURMAPA hospitality center where we could gather to see one another, arrange lunch or other get-togethers with our retired colleagues, etc. We are also looking into a tour of Quebec City. For details and suggestions about these and other such activities, contact Dorothy Hopper.

A statistical survey of our membership was presented by Peter Weller. We have 472 ministers and partners, 104 single or surviving ministers, and 165 surviving partners, making a total of 741 UURMAPA members. Massachusetts with 129 has the greatest number, followed by California, 87; Maine, 55; New York, 47; Florida, 36; and New Hampshire, 34.

Cluster Gatherings are encouraged by your Board for several reasons. They could be smaller more local, one or two-day events (picnics, potlucks tours, discussions, etc.). Reduced travel and hotel costs would make them more affordable than our four regional conferences. This might be of particular interest in areas where we are not in large numbers—fifteen states have 1-5 UURMAPA members—and a significant distance from the regional conferences. Use your UURMAPA directory to identify members near you and contact them to determine interest or contact Dorothy Hopper for news of starting clusters..

We adopted a 2001-2 budget of \$15,100, an increase of \$602 over last year's expenditures but \$3,000 over last year's budget (last year's budget ran a deficit of \$2,398). Member support of UURMAPA last year was \$9,473. To meet the new budget we need to increase member support by \$3,627 to \$13,100.

We noted the problem of losing contact with surviving partners and sometimes not knowing of their deaths. The Department of Ministry tracks ministers and informs us of deaths but partners sometimes get lost in the cracks. If you know of a partner who is ill or in need or has died, please let someone know—Jean Hartman at the Department of Ministry, jhartman@uua.org; your Caring Network Person (see p. 4) or board members Doe Lockwood or Ed Lane (see p. 1 on how to reach them)..

We met with Ralph Mero of the office of Church Staff Finances for extensive discussions of finances vis-à-vis retired ministers and Gene Navias, chair of the Nominating Committee.

Regional Conferences

PAN SOUTH Spring on the Mountain March 18-21, 2002, Mountain Conference Center, Highlands, N. C.

Located high in the Blue Ridge of the Southern Appalachian Mountains, The Mountain is surrounded by the Nantahala National Forest on Little Scaly Mountain, four miles southwest of Highlands. Delicious meals with vegetarian and meat offerings are served buffet style..

The conference begins March 18th after dinner and ends after breakfast on the 21st. Freeman Owle, a member of the Cherokee Nation, will speak on "Mother Earth, Living at Peace." The Rev. Calvin Knapp will have a session on "Religion after the Jesus Seminar." The Rev. Melanie Sullivan will talk on "They" and other racisms. The Rev. Edward Harris will share "Higginson—Hidden History" (the Unitarian abolitionist clergyman who led the black regiment seen in the film *Glory*). Jean McGehee will discuss Faulkner's racial views. Ed and Jean will also speak on "Birmingham in the '50s." We will share humorist Gary Carden's presentation with an Elderhostel group meeting at The Mountain.

The Mountain offers van service to the Atlanta airport—\$50 round trip per person if you check this (and your arrival time) on the registration form. There will also be monies available to help those of us who need it. Early bird discount registration forms will come from The Mountain around December 1—later registration forms will be mailed about February 1.

Chair: Jean McGehee, P.O. Box 439, 21410 Scenic Drive Mentone, AL 35984

WEST – April 22-25, 2002 Vallombrosa Conference Center, Menlo Park, California

The Eleventh UURMAPA West Conference will be April 22 to April 25 (Monday to 1:00 pm on Thursday) at the Vallombrosa Center, Menlo Park, CA. The center is a quiet, lush oasis in the heart of the city, the attractive buildings are surrounded by gigantic trees and flowering shrubs of many varieties from which birds sing all day long. Vallombrosa's staff are uniformly welcoming and meals are outstanding.

The program features Scotty McLennan speaking and discussing "Finding Your Religion When the Faith You Grew Up With Has Lost Its Meaning." Phillip Hewett will present an extended firsthand report on contemporary Polish Unitarianism and Peter Raible, UURMAPA President, will present a report. There will be other wonderful things including an odyssey and chapel.

Cost: One person single room, \$330.00; two persons in double room, \$285.00 per person..

Send registration fee of \$90.00 now to Sue Ayer, Treasurer, UURMAPA West Conference, BPM, box 452, 4117 S.E. Division, Portland OR 97202.. For questions or further information you can reach her at sayer3333@aol.com or by phone 503-233-1618.

Northeast had a large conference with 53 people in attendance and UUA President Bill Sinkford speaking on “The Vision and Practice of the UUA Today,” Jack Mendelsohn speaking on “UU Epiphany at Selma,” and David Cole presenting an Odyssey. Next year’s Conference will be October 8-10, again at Attleboro

David VanStrien presented a resolution. “... affirming the UU Principle of equal justice for all, [we] urge the administration of the UUA to advocate the ending of military aid to Israel until (1) they agree to abide by the United Nations Resolutions dealing with the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, and (2) end all human rights violations of the Palestinian people, rights outlined in the U.N. Declaration of human rights.”

After statements on both sides were made a motion to table passed by a 21-18 vote. David commends to you an article on this topic in the October 3 issue of *Harpers*.

UUA Directories Available

The 2001-2002 UUA Directories are out. Retired ministers should have automatically received a free Directory by now. If you have not received yours, contact the Publications Department at 617 948-4646. Surviving spouses/partners are also entitled to receive a free copy of the Directory—however, these are not sent automatically. The spouse/partner should make their request to Jean Hartman by letter, e-mail, or phone and she will mail them a copy.

Jean Hartman, UUA Dept. of Ministry, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108
jhartman@uua.org 617-948-6437

We Publish

Religious Integrity for Everyone by Fred Campbell; Writers Club Press, \$14.95.
 Order from iuniverse.com.

Fred describes his book as “an essay about the tension between individuals seeking to live with integrity in a cultural setting in which secular and Christian ideas are in dramatic tension.” Recognizing the growing religious pluralism in which Christianity has become one of many sources, both religious and secular, of our values Fred proposes “functional definitions for established religious words,” expanding and modifying their meaning to include both their traditional and new concepts. A Glossary of those functional definitions is included. This is a good book for an adult religious education course.

—Editor

That Book You Want to Publish—Here's a Way

I self-published my book, *Religious Integrity for Everyone*, at a cost of \$300 paid to the publishing company. If you wish to publish a book, go to the web site, www.iuniverse.com and download:

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Books sold on the net return 10% of the retail price to the author. Authors may buy copies in lots of 20 or more at a 30% discount.

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