

Elderberries

The Newsletter of the

Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers & 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

Dear Friends:

Bob and Ann MacPherson organized a very smooth running Conference in Asheville for some 31 participants. The weather was just right as redbuds and dogwoods were bursting along the mountainsides and in the lovely river valleys of the Swannanoa and French Broad Rivers.

Maureen Killoran and Peter Hyatt, her partner, opened the first night with a delightful program about couples maintaining their relationships in the midst of busy lives. Their openness and willingness to share with the conference were much appreciated. Maureen is minister of the 600-member plus Asheville UU church.

Dr. James D. Hunt gave us a wonderful account of Adin Ballou, Tolstoy and Gandhi linked by Christian non-resistance, drawn from Ballou's writings. Dr. Hunt, who taught at Crane prior to its demise, taught at Shaw University before retiring. He attended with his partner Jane.

Monroe Gilmour, a Western North Carolina activist in the causes of civil rights and economic justice, gave a graceful presentation drawn from his work on how "politically correct" charges are dismissory of issues of grave importance. He describes how it is designed to quell one's passion for justice. He is not a Unitarian Universalist but clearly shares many of our concerns and passions. He is part of a group organizing a UU Fellowship in Black Mountain, North Carolina.

Jean Box, partner of Howard Box, played flute for several of gatherings. What a gracious lady and a wonderful talent!

We had a tour of Asheville and on Saturday heard a report of a local Antiracism work that gives one courage and hope.

We heard from our membership in a check-in that deepened our understanding of our unfolding lives. If all our retired ministers and partners are doing things like the group in Asheville much good is being done.

In Attendance were: Pete Tolleson, Peter Hyatt, Maureen Killoran, Qiyamah Rahman—district executive—Barbara Gudmundson, Charles and Claudine Grady, Jean McGehee (she has a book coming our soon) Gordon and Phyllis McKeeman, Clark Olson, Jeanne and Bob Reed (gathering tips for the Fall Midwest Conference in Louisville, Kentucky), Rollene Wells, Ed and Sandra Harris, Farley Wheelright (Farley preached at Asheville Sunday morning), Lois Sampson, and Jim and Jane Hunt.

I know I've left someone or something of importance out of this brief report. Oh yes, the food excellent Southern cooking carefully and beautifully done with regard to fat, cholesterol and other deadly substances.

For those not there—you don't know what you are missing.

Lastly, I should say I gave a report from the board of UURMAPA on our recent meetings.

Ed Harris

The Caring Network

Central Massachusetts: Glen and Lorraine Snowden have graciously replaced William Hammond and Grace Linqvist as Caring Network Contacts for Central Massachusetts. Many thanks to William and Grace who have performed this duty for nine years and only gave it up when health demanded; thanks also to Glen and Lorraine who said "Yes" immediately.

Thomas Jefferson: This district finally got so many retirees we had to split it. Charles and Claudine Grady have served the entire district since June of '95, but it continued to grow rapidly and we split it into NW and SE. George and Elise Briggs took the NW section of Thomas Jefferson and Charles and Claudine kept the SE. Again, thanks to all those good folks.

Doe Lockwood

Heating Grants

Elderberries readers will be interested to know that the Office of Church Staff Finances distributed \$37,600 in special grants for gas and heating oil among retired UU ministers and surviving family members this winter. We were very concerned about the skyrocketing costs of heating fuel, so we invited all retired ministers and families on our mailing list to accept checks for \$300, \$400, or \$500 depending on their need.

We continue to remind UURMAPA members that financial aid is available from the UUA Department of Ministry, the Society for Ministerial Relief, and/or the Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society to assist persons who are in difficult financial circumstances. People in the UURMPA Caring Network are very helpful in letting us know of situations of need.

We are also inviting contributions to the UUA Living Tradition Fund to raise money for seminary scholarships, emergency grants to ministers, and ongoing aid to retired ministers in marginal financial situations. Tax deductible contributions can be directed to UUA LTF, Lock Box 845706, Boston, MA 02284-5706.

We have no higher priority than trying to be helpful to our retired colleagues and their family members. Thanks to all who help make this possible. Do contact me if you need help.

Phone: 617 742-2100, ext. 404 - E-mail: rmero@uua.org

Mail: UUA Dept. of Ministry, 25 Beacon St., Boston MA 02108

*Rev Ralph Mero, Director
UUA Office of Church Staff Finances*

Ed. Note: Our apologies to Ralph for printing his name as "Miro" in the February issue. Guess we'll just have to keep the UUA separated from the art galleries.

Alice Blair Wesley Delivers the Minns Lectures

UURMAPA member, Alice Blair Wesley, delivered the Minns Lectures on April 6 and 7. Her topic was "The Lay and Liberal Doctrine of the Church: the Spirit and Promise of our Covenant." They were given at the First Church and Parish, Dedham, Massachusetts and at All Souls Unitarian Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Four UU churches, called the Tulsa Association of UU Congregations, sponsored the Tulsa lectures.

Alice chose Dedham for the first presentation of her six lectures because that was where a small group of our UU ancestors gathered together in 1637 to create a long, still living, tradition-shaping event: the founding of a particular kind of free church. Weaving a tapestry of nearly 400 years of our history she notes that we gradually "forgot," over time, to neighbor one another, i.e., to seek counsel from nearby UU congregations.

Alice notes that all of our weak and troubled congregations have one thing in common: isolation from one another. "We've forgotten what it means freely to associate among our own free churches, except in some far-off, extra-congregational title-and-committee-ridden District or the UUA—an entity 'over' us not 'of us" (that is) focusing money and time on affinity groups (while disregarding the needs of member congregations)."

The Minns lectures can be received by e-mail upon request. Make your request to Alice or her husband, Joe, at alicejoe@aol.com.

UURMAPA Northeast Conference

The Northeast UURMAPA Conference is scheduled for October 9-11 (Tuesday 4:PM - Thursday 1:00PM) at the LaSalett Center, Attleboro, Massachusetts. As of this date the members of the Planning Committee are: Peter Baldwin, Hvezdon and Vera Kafka (Registrar), Glen (Chair) and Lorraine Snowden. We hope to have a fully staffed Planning Committee by May 1.

We will announce details of the Conference at the UURMAPA luncheon at General Assembly, and the Conference mailing will go out in early July. In the meantime please mark your calendars now and look forward to spending some beautiful foliage time in New England as well as some beautiful social and spiritual time at the Northeast Conference. For more information please contact Glen Snowden gsnow3@junolcom or call 508 393-1261.

A Midwest conference in Louisville is being planned for October 5-7. Contact Bob Reed, 750 Zorn Avenue #37—uumin59@win.net for additional information.

UURMAPA at GA

UURMAPA will be sponsoring two events at the upcoming Cleveland General Assembly. The first is a workshop on the theme, "Fear of Retirement," to be held 4:45-6:00 PM (following the final Candidates' Forum) on Friday, June 22nd in the Convention Center, Room 205. As the GA program will tell you, "a panel of 'experts' will address the daunting issues of retirement, especially the emotional stresses due to loss of prestige, power and professional ties, possible relocation, health and financial concerns. Panelists will be Iska and David Cole, Carolyn and Max Gaebler, Helen Lane, and Gretchen and Ray Manker." UURMAPA board member Peter Weller will moderate. This promises to be an informative and stimulating program.

The second event will be our annual luncheon following Sunday's Service of the Living Tradition, to be held in the Huron Room of the Marriott Hotel. As in past years, UURMAPA will invite, as special guests, those who will have been recognized in the SLT as completing their active ministries along with their spouses/partners. This event is open, of course, to all UURMAPA members, although these attendees will be asked to pay for their luncheons.

Regarding the latter, we did not have, as of this newsletter deadline, information on the luncheon price and menu selections. If you plan be in Cleveland and wish to attend, Peter Weller hopes to have this info by June 1. Please contact him at 970 224-3437, by e-mail at wellerpj@msn.com, or by s-mail at 1644 Northbrook Court, Fort Collins, CO 80526.

Peter Weller

Board Opposes "Dearly Departed" Proposal

The following resolution regarding the relationship of retired ministers to their former church was adopted by a unanimous vote of the UURMAPA Board at its April meeting in Tulsa:

The UURMAPA Board has read and discussed the "Dearly Departed" document. We feel it is flawed in three ways because:

1. It fails to emphasize the needs and spiritual health of the departing minister and the incoming minister and the congregation's need to "let go" when a person's ministry ends.
2. It fails to recognize that a ministry is validated through the institution of the church and not through a minister acting in a personal capacity.
3. It gives the departing minister more rationale for further involvement in a former congregation than do the current Guidelines.

In Memoriam

Ruth Klotzle died February 7, 2001. Deceased partner Dana Klotzle. Her son is: David Klotzle, 6 Skvton Drive, Croton-on-Hudson, NY, 10520.

The Reverend Thomas Ewell Hopkins died March 25, 2001. Surviving Partner: Esther A. Hopkins, 1550 Worcester Road, #309, Framingham, MA 01702

The Reverend Harry A. Thor died March 1, 2001. Surviving Partner: Iris Thor, 410 Bunn Hill Road, Vestal, NY 13850-5916.

The Reverend Cary Kauffman died February 2, 2001. Surviving Partner: Gerald (Jerry) S. Schatz 2901 Newton Street, Wheaton, MD 20902-1233.

The Reverend James Mead died March 17, 2001. Surviving Partner: Mary (Rink) Mead, 4416 SE Milwaukee Avenue, Portland, OR 97202.

If I can let you go as trees let go
 Their leaves, so casually, one by one;
 If I can come to know what they do know,
 That fall is the release, the consummation, ...
 If I can take the dark with open eyes
 And call it seasonal, not harsh or strange ...
 And, treelike, stand unmoved before the change,
 Lose what I lose to keep what I can keep,
 The strong root still alive under the snow,
 Love will endure—if I can let you go.
 —May Sarton

UUMA Convocation 2002

Convo 2002 will be held in Birmingham, Alabama March 6-10 2002. The theme is: "The Mind and Soul on Fire—When Hunger and Passion Meet." You should have received details and registration forms. If you did not, or if you have questions, write to the UUMA office, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108-2800; e-mail convo2002@uua.org.

Grant Haskell reports: "... at age 85 I am not as spry as I might be. Only attend church services occasionally as friends offer to drive. A year ago I enrolled with CLF so as to be counted as a UU—a suggestion I might make to other retirees.

Oh, the Interesting Lives We Lead ...

Robert and Catharine Ross were in New Zealand during February for a preaching engagement, snorkeling and visiting friends. As a consultant Robert is doing career development work and helping corporate management teams increase their effectiveness. He and Ned Wight are organizing a Southern California chapter of the UU Christian Fellowship.

Ed Lane went to Botswana last year building houses as a Habitat volunteer. He will go again in June, this time to Tanzania. As you read this Helen and Ed will be bicycling in northern Italy and Austria.

... and the Pangs of Aging We Suffer

Ken Hawkes has had surgery for heart and breathing problems.

Elizabeth Silliman has a broken hip and is in a nursing home.

Ray Hopkins has a broken hip.

Earle McKinney has a fractured bone in his back and is now in an assisted living center at Seventy Five State Street, 75 State St., Portland, ME 04101. Phone 207 773 6695

Al and Irene Perry are both in a nursing home. Al is in advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease. Irene has diabetes and lost a leg.

Jeremy Brigham reports that his mother Anna Louise Brigham is in the hospital and not likely to return home as John cannot care for her there.

William Robbins' mail was returned marked "deceased." We are happy to report that the Post Office was wrong. He has advanced Alzheimer's and is living with his son at 51 Mahals Lane HCR. 32, Box 190 Owls Head, ME 04854.

From Your Editor

This issue of *Elderberries* marks the completion of one year as your editor. Your good feedback tells me that *Elderberries* should be a medium of keeping in touch with the lives of your retired colleagues and their partners—and not just when they die. You want to know about the interesting things they are doing and when they are facing crises in their lives. Hence the above two articles—which I hope is a step toward meeting that need.

Your president, Ed Harris, reports on his visit to the Pan-South Conference. He modestly did not report on a serious automobile accident he had on the way home from the UURMAPA Board meeting in Tulsa in March: He skidded on ice, broke a tooth, neck, shoulder, arm, ribs, foot, and ankle. He is in physical therapy and doing well.

How he could go through all that and still go to the Conference in Ashville to represent the Board is beyond me! He has decided, however, that he will not accept a second term as president and has notified the nominating committee that they will need to seek a successor. We extend to him our prayers and good thoughts for his continuing recovery.

Ed Lane

Cyber-Church

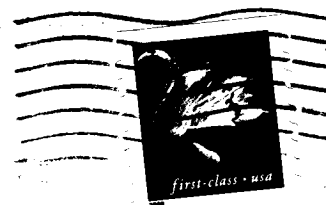
Although we know very little about James Park and this project, we find it interesting and pass it on to our members in case any of you are interested. —Ed

If you served UU congregations as a preacher for a number of years, you created and delivered hundreds of sermons. WWCC offers you a free way to share your best sermons through the First UU Church of the Internet. WWCC might stand for World Wide Computer Church. Its main purpose is to locate and distribute the very best in UU thinking to a world-wide group of subscribers to its e-mailing list.

You begin by submitting a synopsis and/or outline for your cyber-sermon to be selected. This should be only about half a page of writing. If the subscribers to WWCC-L select your proposal, you will then be asked to revise the sermon to about three pages in length for presentation to a world-wide audience by means of the Internet.

Here is the best web-site for comprehensive information about the First UU Church of the Internet: <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~parkx032/Y-INDEX.html>, and here is the e-mail address of the webmaster: James Park: PAKx032@TC.UMN.EDU.

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