

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

Some years ago, I served a term as President of the UU Ministers Association, so it seems fitting that I round out my experience by serving as President of UURMAPA. Perhaps it is a bit like moving from the House of Commons to the House of Lords. I see four key roles for our work together in UURMAPA:

First, we provide a continuing fellowship for our ongoing concerns, joys, and collegiality of our ministries (ordained or in partner roles). This is most evident in our highly successful and well attended regional conferences but also in this newsletter. We have many other opportunities to gather together and to ferret out new ways to stay in touch. Dorothy Hopper coordinates the efforts of these various regional groups. Aid funds are available for conference expenses where there is a need.

Second, we have established a caring network, which strives to make sure all in the retired ranks (ministers, partners, and surviving spouses) do not fall off the radar screen. Often in informal ways, we can provide for the tangible and intangible needs of our members. This effort requires constant attention and just to know the current location of some of our members is a daunting task. Doe Lockwood ably coordinates this ongoing effort.

Third, we have established a continuing relationship with the UUA's Department of the Ministry. A number of funds, some going back to a time before there were organized Universalist and Unitarian movements in North America, provide monies for fiscal grants to those among us who have dire needs. Funds, of course, are limited, but often persons who most need such aid are reluctant to ask for it. We try to provide a channel to and a certain amount of lobbying with the Department of the Ministry, when necessary. We are, however, well served by the ministrations of Ralph Mero at headquarters. He is a jewel in our midst.

Finally, we will be an advocacy group. We try to enhance the recognition of retired ministers within the UUMA. We look for programs to initiate that could be helpful to our members. We have particular concerns with surviving partners, who may no longer have any formal contacts with local congregations. We should push for changes in governmental laws or rulings, which could be of assistance to our members. We are not trying to replace the AARP, but we do have advocacy concerns for our own members.

Please feel free to contact me. After August 15th, I will be serving through June, 2002, as the interim minister of Eliot Unitarian Chapel, 216 East Argon, Kirkwood, MO 63122-4310. Phone: (314) 821-0911.

Peter Raible

UURMAPA in Cleveland

We sponsored two events at the GA in June: a panel workshop on the theme, "Fear of Retirement," and our usual Sunday luncheon following the Service of the Living Tradition. Both events turned out well.

Those who came to the workshop displayed a keen interest in the subject and clearly appreciated the thoughtful and candid statements by panelists Iska and David Cole, Max Gaebler, Helen Lane and Gretchen and Ray Manker. Though there were common themes expressed by all, a more striking message was conveyed by the widely differing ways in which each had responded to retirement, to both its issues and its opportunities. Clearly, and in keeping with UU principles, there is no one way to happiness and fulfillment at this stage of life.

The buffet luncheon (a departure from the sit-down events of the past) was well received and attended by 46, including both existing members and several new retirees as guests. We heard from each about what was going on in their lives, as well as getting additional words from incoming president Peter Raible, board members Dorothy Hopper (on area conferences) and Doe Lockwood (on the Caring Committee), and our most frequent UUA contact, Ralph Mero. It seemed clear that everyone enjoyed the opportunity for news from and contact with former colleagues and their partners. Our thanks to Peter Weller for his fine work in planning the dinner and to Dorothy Hopper who organized the panel.

UURMAPA board members at GA were also given the privilege of attending the special Saturday evening dinner, sponsored by the Dept. of Ministry, for surviving family members of those ministers who had been deceased in the past year.

UUMA Convocation 2002

The Mind and Spirit on Fire: When Hunger and Passion Meet

March 6-10, 2002 - Birmingham, Alabama

Deepening our Call
Nurturing our Faith
Claiming our Prophetic Voice
Living our Mission

If you have misplaced your registration packet in a sea of paper, e-mail the Convo Planning Committee at Convo2002@uua.org and we will put another packet in the mail to you.

In Memoriam

The Reverend Jack Kent died April 18. Surviving partner: Barbara Kent c/o Jay Kent, 754 E. 8th Street, North Vancouver, BC V7L 2A2, Canada.

Muriel Hayward died May 26. Surviving partner: Jack Hayward, 245 Magnolia Lane, Carbondale, IL 62901; jfhay@earthlink.net.

Carolyn Westwood died May 29. Surviving partner: Arnold Westwood 154 Windsor Bush Road. Cummington, MA 01026-9621.

Donna B. Gault died July 7. Surviving partner: Elium E Gault, 5 Oregon Avenue, Hazlet, NJ, 07730-2215; eliumdonnagault@webtv.net.

To die a little later or a little sooner does not matter. But to live bravely, to love life, to see how beautiful the trees are and the mountains, yes, and even the sea, to enjoy work because it produces food for life. ... we love life because we live in danger. We do not fear death because we understand that life and death are necessary to each other —Pearl Buck

The Caring Network

We have Caring Network contact people from A to Z, A being Dick and Lois Allen, Piedmont, California and Z being Robert and Jean Zoerheide, Baltimore, Maryland. Bob and Jean signed on in June to replace Eileen Karpeles who has moved to California. For the second time around, we also have John and Dru Cummins, Minneapolis, Minnesota. John and Dru have served Prairie Star before—from 1990 to 1994. I hated to ask them to serve again but Charity Rowley insisted and she was right, as usual. So, a big thanks to all of them. It was good to see eleven of them at the UURMAPA luncheon at GA.

Doe Lockwood

Minister Wanted

Part-time settled minister wanted for small central Maine UU congregation. Prefer individual located locally, but will consider all replies including offers to fill pulpit. Please call Tom Brown (207) 487-4926; jofrost@midmaine.com.

"A Harvest of a Lifetime" Workshop

UURMAPA member Lex Crane is leading "A Harvest of a Lifetime" workshop on September 28-30 at the UU camp in Rowe, Massachusetts, located in the magical Berkshires. The themes include "Love, Intimacy, Meaning, Mysticism, and Religion." A full description is available in the Rowe flyer. For information and registration phone or write: Rowe Camp and Conference Center, P.O. Box 273, Rowe, MA 01367; (413) 339-4954; retreat@rowecenter.org.

Regional Conferences

MIDWEST – October 5-7, 2001 – Louisville, Kentucky

This year's Midwest gathering of UURMAPA members will be at the Fairfield Inn in Jeffersonville Indiana, just a stone's throw from the Ohio River and across from downtown Louisville. In addition to generous times for sharing at the beginning and end of the gathering, there will be three programs by colleagues highlighting our own experience and hopes. In addition there will be:

- Sunday morning worship at the First Unitarian Church in Louisville
- An Actors Theatre performance of the Kentucky cave musical, *Floyd Collins*
- Guided museum tours at Churchill Downs and the fossil beds of the Falls of the Ohio.

Cost for everything, including lodging, all events, local travel, and meals, except for one evening meal, will be \$386 (i.e. \$193 each) for two to a room, \$315 for one. (Contact David Hubner at the UUA if financial assistance is needed.) The Fairfield Inn is a modest-sized, new, accessible, two-story facility with internal hallways, meeting rooms, pool, and fitness center. For registration or additional information, please contact Bob and Jeanne Reed, 750 Zorn Ave., #37, Louisville, KY 40206; uumin59@home.com; (715) 686-2615. Registration deadline: September 1.

NORTHEAST – Being Together, Celebrating Together October 9-11, 2001 – La Salette Center, Attleboro, Massachusetts

We begin at 4 pm on October 9 and end with lunch on the 11th. There is time for singing and sharing with lifelong friends and colleagues. New UUA President Bill Sinkford has been invited to speak and discuss with us "The Vision and Practice of the UUA Today." Jack Mendelsohn will present a program on "UU Epiphany at Selma." David Cole will present an "Odyssey of the Mind and Spirit." New UURMAPA President Peter Raible will be with us.

Cost is \$130 per person. All rooms are single with each two rooms sharing a bath. Additional information and registration: Vera Kafka, Registrar, 45 St. James Circle, Hudson, MA 01749; hvezdon@aol.com; (978) 562-5966.

PAN SOUTH – Spring On the Mountain
March 18-22, 2002 – Mountain Conference Center, Highlands N.C.

We begin Monday evening March 18 and end Friday morning March 22. UURMAPA van transportation from the Atlanta airport and from east and north. Program: (1) The history, culture and art of the Cherokee Nation, in connection with the nearby Cherokee Cultural Center; (2) An event to delight those who love literature and poetry; (3) growing up in Birmingham, the White and the Black experience. (Both Ed Harris and Jean McGehee grew up in Birmingham in the Time of Trauma.)

Chair: Jean McGehee PO Box 439, Mentone, AL 35984 or jmcgehee@peop.tds.net; (256) 6344-4377.

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

Western hospitality awaits UURMAPA conferees at Vallombrosa Conference Center, 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 members are uniformly welcoming and meals are outstanding. Complimentary wine is served with dinner. It's even rumored that several Western UURMAPA members this year tried to kidnap the Center's chef. Speakers thus far committed for 2002: Peter Raible, giving "a substantive paper," and Phillip Hewett delivering an extended first-hand report on contemporary Polish Unitarians.

Coordinator: Barbara Lewis, 3124 NE 24th Ave., Portland, OR 97212; (503) 281-9262.

We Publish

Theodore A. Webb, *Seven Sons: Millionaires and Vagabonds*, Trafford Publishing, Vancouver, British Columbia, 1999. Reviewed by Charles Howe, author of *The Larger Faith: A Short History of American Universalism*

This is the story of the seven sons of Israel and Martha Washburn of Livermore, Maine, all of whom left their mark on four decades of nineteenth century American life. Raised in a Universalist family, all of them, in one way or another, carried the influence of that liberal faith with them throughout their lives. Israel, Jr., the oldest, grew up to be a governor of Maine, a railroad president, a congressman, a radical Republican, and an influential

denominational leader who gave a major address at the Gloucester centennial in 1870. Algernon, a regular attender of Universalist churches, became, first, a Boston merchant, then a Maine banker. Elihu had an outstanding career in government as congressman, Secretary of State, and ambassador to France; he promoted Ulysses S. Grant into the presidency, and was himself nominated for that office. Though not active in church affairs, he was a generous supporter of the church of his youth. Cadwallader, the first of the brothers to go west, was an active member of the Universalist church of LaCrosse, Wisconsin. He, too, served in the United States Congress, and during the Civil War rose to the rank of major general. Later he went on to become governor of Wisconsin, a business tycoon, and a millionaire. Charles also went west, becoming a successful newspaper editor in San Francisco, where he attended the Unitarian church during the ministry of Thomas Starr King. He, too, ran for Congress, hoping to join his three brothers in the House of Representative, but failed to be elected. Later, President Lincoln sent him on a diplomatic mission to Paraguay. Samuel went off to sea at an early age and became a sea captain. During the Civil War he commanded Union ships in southern waters. He apparently had no church involvement as an adult. William, the youngest, also went west and became a highly successful businessman. He, too, served in the House of Representatives, and later as a senator and as governor of Minnesota. Through his leadership a still flourishing Universalist church was organized in Minneapolis. The lives of these seven remarkable Washburn brothers, with their significant contributions in politics, commerce and religion, were woven into the very fabric of nineteenth century America. Theodore Webb's book, the product of some twenty-five years of research and writing, is a solid contribution to the history of that period and the Universalist impulse within it.

Charles A. Howel

Dick Allen writes: "I think I have completed my life's work, which is to give my message to the world. I am putting it out on a web site and presenting it in three different forms, a book of sermons, some CD's of me preaching, and an essay that sums it up. I am pleased with all three forms. It has taken me a long time to put it all together, and if you see the later part of the essay, I think I have a place in the unfolding history of Western thought. Kind of grandiose? OK, unlikely, however I feel rather emptied right now. ... The web site is UUSermons.com

If this is a culmination of my thinking, it is not so far from where I began. In life, there are vast uncertainties, but as uncertainties, they are uncertain, so we live awash in shifting probabilities. I am not cynical and life is not essentially tragic, indeed, life has it all, sheer fun to sheer catastrophe. It is all there, and our initiative is uncertain. We probably have more freedom that we really want and, at the same time, are held back by submerged influences that we can scarcely find.

Yours in the struggle,
Dick Allen

I Laughed All the Way Home From the Church: During one of Joe's interim ministries Laile Bartlett was introduced to someone as "the minister's interim wife."

UURMAPA Banner

Our lovely new banner designed and made by Iska Cole made its debut at the banner parade at the General Assembly in Cleveland.

There are six symbols on it. At the top is the name: UU REITRED MINISTERS and PARTNERS. Below that is a sunset with blue sky and clouds. In the center is a dark green velvet chalice with a gold flame on a background of blue-green.

In the upper left corner is a star of flowerlike appliqué, representing a garden and also the "singles" among us, the widows and widowers. In the upper right corner is a white dove in flight, symbolizing our hope and our work for peace. In the lower left corner is a sailboat representing the travels that some of us do and also suggesting "sailing into the sunset." In the lower right corner is an appliqué red heart representing our Caring Network.

This project was an awesome responsibility with much agonizing and painful decision making to say nothing of an incredible amount of work, day and night, just to do the quilting. Our profound thanks to Iska for a job well done!

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