

# Elderberries



the newsletter of the

Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association

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## Meet Your New Board Members

### Joel Weaver, Treasurer



I've retired twice, the first time from the General Electric Company after 31 years of service, the second time after 10 years as a commercial pilot. I am a

veteran of 3 years of peacetime service as an enlisted member of the U.S. Army. My formal education includes undergraduate study of mechanical engineering followed by a B.A. and an M.A. in economics. My GE employment was in financial analysis for the lighting manufacturing and mortgage insurance businesses followed by 10 years of operations management at the mortgage insurance company. My flying career involved inspection of pipeline rights of way in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Ohio and Michigan while flying a light airplane just above the tree tops.

The Rev. Dr. Carol Taylor, a retired UU minister, is my wife of 22 years. We met when I transferred to PA from NC and joined the Main Line Unitarian Church, which she then served. I have 2 sons from a first marriage and 2 grandchildren. Carol has 2 sons, a daughter and 2 grandchildren. Carol and I are now members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County in Media, Pennsylvania.

My current service offices include treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Murray Grove Retreat and Renewal Center in New Jersey, president of the board of my neighborhood's homeowners association and precinct committee person for the Tredyffrin Township Democratic Party. I am a long-time jogger and home fix-it guy.

### Judy Gibson, Secretary

Judy Gibson retired as Director of Continuing Education at Michigan's Glen Oaks Community College in 2001, four years before her minister husband, Gordon Gibson, retired and became Minister Emeritus with the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart, IN.



In 2004, they together began organizing and leading spring pilgrimages to southern civil rights sites. This program has grown to become the Unitarian Universalist Living Legacy Project, where Judy serves as secretary to the Board. They have helped lead a total of eight pilgrimages across the south to date, with three more ahead in 2014-2015 when significant Movement events such as Mississippi Freedom Summer and the Selma Voting Rights Campaign reach fifty year anniversaries. (See related article on page 10.)

The Gibsons moved to Knoxville, Tennessee in 2006, and are active members in the Tennessee Valley UU Church. Judy has become certified and serves as a volunteer naturalist at the local nature center. She enjoys reading, exercise, dancing, and living close enough to the Smokies for day programs and hikes — as aging joints allow.

The Gibsons have two daughters and three grandchildren, with whom they visit at least annually in Muncie, Indiana and San Francisco, California.

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Contact information for everyone above can be found in the on-line directory at [www.uurmapa.org](http://www.uurmapa.org) or in the printed directory.

You may view online or download the Membership Directory (updated regularly) at [www.uurmapa.org](http://www.uurmapa.org) under the Publications tab. The required ID is UU-SAGE and the password is WISDOM (in caps and with the hyphen.)

## **From Your Editor:**

This is the first edition of *Elderberries* that is not password protected. In an effort to increase the number of people who read it, I asked the Board to consider lifting the password so that it would be easier to access, and they agreed. There doesn't seem to be any personal information included in this newsletter (at least in my experience so far) that isn't already accessible on line, probably in multiple locations. So as of May 1, 2014, you are just as protected as you were earlier — which is to say, as well as you have set up your own system. Back issues of *Elderberries* also will no longer be password protected.

Perhaps you are aware that we have archived on our web site long versions of many obituaries of ministers and their partners, often including additional photographs. These have not been password protected for years — they are readily available to anyone doing biographical or historical research, as well as anyone wishing simply to check a date or the name of the next of kin. We hope that these pages will be a useful and interesting resource for Unitarian Universalists and others for decades to come. I would like to thank once again the people who give such care to the writing of these obituaries: Jay Atkinson for the ministers and Chris Lilly Backus for the partners.

Our Membership Directory, which is updated monthly, will remain password protected. Printed copies are sent to new UURMaPA members, and the updated ones are available on our web site; instructions for access are printed in the box on the left side of this page.

In other news, your Board has decided to enlist a designer to create a logo specifically for UURMaPA. We will use it on the *Elderberries* masthead, on our letterhead and note paper, and on our future publications. We hope that it will be ready by this summer, although we are currently in the earliest phase of the design process. If you would like to participate in the process of creating our logo, please send me an e-mail message right away and I will send you the questionnaire that the Board has used to give some guidance to our designer, Greg Bear (a member of the UU congregation where I served as minister).

As always, I welcome your feedback and your suggestions for the regular columns (Leadership, Partner's, and What Brings You Joy?). It is a delight to serve you.

—Judy Welles

Please send your requests, comments and feedback to [elderberries@uurmapa.org](mailto:elderberries@uurmapa.org).

Oxford biologist Richard Dawkins writes:

*"We are going to die, and that makes us the lucky ones. Most people are never going to die because they are never going to be born. The potential people who could have been here in my place but who will in fact never see the light of day outnumber the sand grains of the Sahara.*

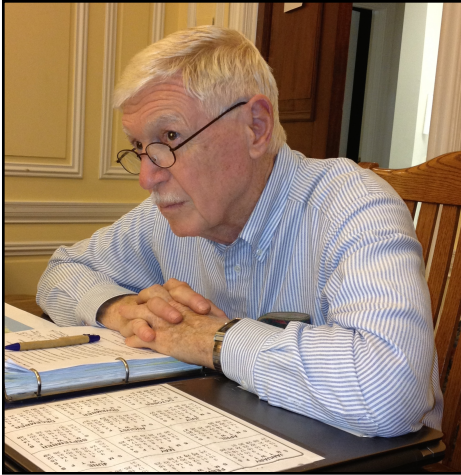
*Certainly those unborn ghosts include greater poets than Keats, scientists greater than Newton.*

*We know this because the set of possible people allowed by our DNA so massively outnumbers the set of actual people.*

*In the teeth of these stupefying odds, it is you and I, in our ordinariness, that are here."*

# A Word from Your President

## “The Empty Chair”



As President of UURMaPA, one of my responsibilities is to write condolence notes to surviving ministers, partners or family members. Sometimes I know the deceased and the survivors; sometimes I don't, but it is always a poignant moment when I sign those notes on your behalf.

As I climb through my late 70's, I am more acutely aware of people who die at an age very near my own, or even younger. It greatly concentrates the mind. My therapy is usually to write, and so I wrote something about my father which seems to have universal application.

I can see him now in his old Morris chair, predecessor of the recliner, with his pipe or cigar or cigarette which often burned holes in his shirts as he dozed off, much to my mother's consternation. His smoking drove both of us to the edge, but we loved him still. And so these words for all those who lose loved ones. I call it “The Empty Chair.”

There is something about an empty chair  
That reminds us of our ultimate loneliness,  
Evoking memories of those we have loved and lost.  
No longer will they occupy that chair,  
However much their image is etched in our memory.  
Something there is in us that doesn't like an empty chair,  
That wants it occupied by the ones we love and loved.  
Its presence haunts us with memories that fade but do not die.  
We reach out hands across empty space,  
Encircling nothing but a memory.  
Our fingers caress the well-known cracks and grooves,  
As familiar to us as the body that filled them.  
Our eyes create the image of a former time when loved ones  
brought a chair to life and endeared it to us.  
Now there is little to do but sit, supported by the  
    strength of years,  
Occupying beloved space for a time,  
Rejoicing in times gone by, never to return.  
Chairs are sturdy, though.  
They know the comings and goings of people,  
The assault of young bodies and the gentler weight  
    of old ones.  
They know the passing of the years;  
They absorb all in well-worn wood.  
People, like chairs, are sturdy too.



— Richard S. Gilbert  
President of UURMaPA

**Send updates!** Please send any changes to your address, phone or e-mail to:  
Marcia Olsen at [membership@uurmapa.org](mailto:membership@uurmapa.org) or 285 NW 35th Street, Apt. 52,  
Corvallis, OR 97330. The most current Directory is online at [www.UURMAPA.org](http://www.UURMAPA.org)  
(ID: UU-SAGE, password WISDOM).

## Looking Forward, Looking Back

*It's spring, the time when some ministers seek new settlements and others have determined that it's time to leave for greener pastures. Here are the words of two colleagues — one looking ahead to a new career in ministry, the other reflecting back on a long career in the profession. Food for thought for all of us as we experience both the renewal of the season and the limitations of our lives.*

*[Note: both of these columns will be published for a wider audience in Joanna's blog <http://bootsandblessings.blogspot.com/>]*

### Looking Forward - Joanna Fontaine Crawford

I am so busy trying to look both forward and back, my head is swiveling like a character from *The Exorcist*.

Part of this is circumstantial. I'm about to be in the middle of candidating week, which means looking forward to a new ministry, new congregants, new life. And I'm looking back at the church I'm leaving. I've spent the last two years as the contract minister of what was my home church, helping them in their transition to being one of three campuses of our multi-site church in Houston. My heart is simultaneously breaking with grief at leaving them, and soaring with joy and hope of the future.

In the bigger picture of my ministry, my head is spinning there, too. For the past year, I have been studying the writings of James Luther Adams, line by line. I have also been reading as much as I can get my hands on (precious little) about the Universalist Humiliati and those who influenced them.

At the same time, I am so deeply connected in the Internet, it's just another layer of my reality. I pull one or two sentences from Adams' writings for a daily quote blog I curate, called "Stone by Stone: The Daily JLA." Every Thursday, I'm on a webcast called "The VUU" (think of a TV show broadcast on the internet) with UU colleagues across the country. And Facebook — it's so interwoven in my life, it's like a window I pass several times a day. I pause, I wave at folks, I leave a comment and see what's going on with them.

It is hard sometimes to tell which is which, future and past. I read words written before I was born and it's as if they were written last week. They still teach; they still provide guidance for UU's today. *Will we listen?*

During pre-candidating, I had a running private conversation (via Facebook) with 2 colleagues in the same situation. I doubt it was much different from the conversations that have happened for years between colleagues. "Oh, man, I can't believe I said ..." "I'm a little concerned over this thing in their budget ..." "How many times of saying the word 'God' in a pre-candidating sermon is too many?" What was different



### Looking Back - Ken Collier

I think the core of any successful ministry, whether that of the newly ordained or longtime veteran, is a very deep trust. Without that, it doesn't much matter what you do. So a question I would ask is how to create that trust, especially in churches that have been through traumatic ministerial endings. And notice that the ending of a good

ministry is every bit as traumatic as the ending of a difficult and divisive ministry. Think how traumatic the death of someone you love deeply is, especially when it comes with only about 90 days of preparation.

I have served several churches in which I followed a series of traumatic ministerial endings, and this is what I have found. Building trust takes time, and therefore great patience. You have to demonstrate over and over that you both trust and are trustworthy. That won't happen immediately, because there will always be a residue of suspicion and even resentment built by past experiences. So the first necessity needed is patience, great patience.

You also need to be aware of your own limitations, not trying to handle that which you are not very good at or trained for. The ministry is such a complex and difficult job that no one can do all of it equally well. You have to know what you are good at and what you are not so good at, and be willing to let other people handle the latter, freeing you to do the former. So the next necessity is self-awareness, and the ability to let others handle things that they can do better than you.

Next, you need to have the humility to stand aside. This humility will let your self-awareness free you. Furthermore, in the context of a Board, the minister is not in the center of things. She or he may be at the center of churches of a certain size, but he or she is never at the center of the Board. It sometimes takes great humility to let the Board be the Board, and not struggle against it, but work together with it, even when you can see that what they are trying to do will not work. Ministry is no place for a perfectionist. You give your advice and counsel and let them act as they see fit. Without humility, you are lost.

was that this conversation connected friends in Boston and Texas, happened in words typed with hours between question and reply, and often late at night.

Okay, maybe that last part is exactly the same.

The past informs the present, and gives us direction toward the future. We are still separating out the transient from the permanent. Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.

*The Reverend Joanna Fontaine Crawford is in preliminary fellowship with the UUA. She attended Houston Graduate School of Theology, is a second-generation UU and a 7<sup>th</sup> generation Texan, and is currently living in Houston with her partner, Tom, and their four children. But maybe not for long.*

And even with all of this, there is no guarantee that the necessary trust will be built. Some churches are so used to struggle and conflict that it seems abnormal to trust the minister. Some churches are so attached to the previous minister that they simply cannot let go and so cannot trust the new minister. In these churches it may well take a succession of ministers to break the cycle and generate that trust. And so finally, you need to be so in touch that you can recognize when it is time to leave. More ministries and churches are damaged by ministers who stay too long than almost anything else.

*Ken Collier retired from the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara in 2007 and still lives in Santa Barbara with his wife, Anne Anderson.*



## **Tax Exemption for Clergy Housing Allowance Is in Peril**

UURMaPA, the UUMA, and the UUA are among many signatories to an *Amicus Curiae* brief protesting the possible loss of the federal tax exemption for cash-equivalent clergy housing allowance. The decision on this case could have a very significant impact on retired ministers. Here's some background:

When the Freedom From Religion Foundation sued the federal government and the IRS, arguing that the clergy housing allowance exemption was unconstitutional, a District Judge in Wisconsin upheld their argument. Now the Obama administration will appeal that decision in the 7th U.S. Circuit Court in Chicago. It is not known when that decision will be handed down.

The UUA and its affiliate organizations are part of the Church Benefit Association, joining 36 other organizations in signing a statement which Richard Nugent, Director of the UUA's Office of Church Staff Finances, characterized as "quite compelling, while... the decision of the district court judge was anything but..." Richard would be willing to send the full document to anyone requesting it.

Opinions among UU clergy vary, but not too much. According to Don Southworth, Executive Director of the UUMA, a recent poll of UUMA members indicated that 83% of the seventy-five respondents believed that the Clergy Housing Allowance was good for our wallets, and 35% believed the exemption is a violation of the separation of church and state. (Note: this adds up to 118%, reflecting that some of our colleagues hold both opinions.)

UURMaPA President Dick Gilbert says "I find myself conflicted over the issue itself. On the one hand, clearly a decision to end the allowance would negatively affect many of us financially, though not disastrously so.

"On the other hand, I have a fairly hard time these days defending such special treatment. In days when ministers were fed from parishioners' gardens and lived in a parsonage, it might have made sense. Even now, many ministers are grossly underpaid. However, is it the responsibility of government to give them a special break? What about separation of church and state?"

John Weston, a member of UURMaPA's Board, makes a reasonable suggestion that if the allowance is ended, it ought to be done over a period of time — he suggests 10% over 10 years — on the grounds that many have made their retirement plans based on the current practice. He writes, "the sudden cessation of the ministers housing allowance would be disproportionately injurious to the many retired clergy and clergy nearing retirement. Since these clergy had a right to anticipate that the income from their denominational retirement plan would be exempt from federal income tax to the degree that it was applied to their domiciliary costs, the effect of the cessation will be to reduce the value of ministers' retirement income by some 25%. This is an especially sharp blow to clergy and partners in or near retirement, who have few options to increase their income post-retirement."

An argument made by some colleagues is that if the housing allowance exemption is removed, congregations ought to pay half of the Social Security and Medicare contributions, as most employers are required to do. This is a separate issue that would offset a loss of the exemption for housing allowance, but only for those who are still working. Many retired clergy who do not have earned income would still face a negative financial impact if part of their retirement income is no longer exempt from income tax.

We'll report on any court action to keep you up to date on this issue.

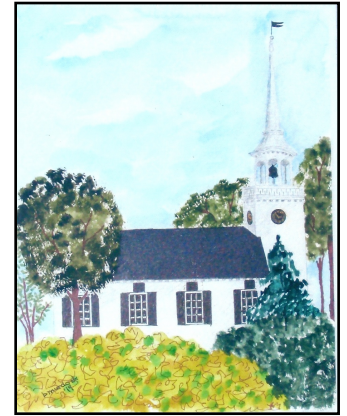
# What Brings You Joy?

## Drawing Pictures - Betty Murdock

When I was working as a reporter on Oklahoma's largest newspaper after college, I met my future husband, Virgil Murdock (everyone, including myself, called him Bud). He wanted to study for the Unitarian ministry, which did not sit well with me since I had no desire to be a "preacher's wife." But marry him I did, and eighteen months later we packed up the blue Hudson convertible and, pulling a trailer like all good Oakies, we headed east – our destination being Cambridge, MA where Bud had been accepted to the Harvard Divinity School. Others entering Harvard along with my husband were Theologian Paul Tillich and New Testament Scholar Amos Wilder. Not bad company, though the latter two stood at the head of a classroom imparting their wisdom and knowledge while Bud sat with other students absorbing what they had to say.

It was at this time that I decided to take a Basic Drawing class at the Cambridge Adult Education Center. I'm not sure how much I got from that class but I did become expert at drawing Chianti bottles.

Over the years following Bud's graduation, my time was spent being a wife, mother to Lisa, homemaker and volunteer. Bud had one church (see my watercolor) in the lovely Massachusetts village of Westford and then was called to be the Director and Minister-at-Large of The Benevolent Fraternity of Unitarian Churches (an old Boston social service agency) — a position he held for 21 years. During those years, he also served on the UUA Board of Trustees and was President of the UU Ministers Association. Unfortunately, he became a victim of the dreaded Alzheimer's Disease in his late 50's. Once again we packed up our station wagon for the long drive back to Oklahoma, where we would spend our retirement years in a home we purchased in Tulsa. After six years as Bud's caregiver, I had to put him into a nursing home – always a very hard decision to make. That was in 1993. He died in 1998.



First Parish Church United of Westford, MA.



Red Barn in Autumn

One of the first things I did after Bud's death was to sell my house. My church in Tulsa, All Souls, owns a number of small homes across the street, and one came up for rent at the time I needed a new place to live. So All Souls is now my landlord – I love it. Now I had some extra time on my hands, and about five years ago I said to myself, "I think I can draw." I went out and bought a drawing pad and a book on "How to Draw." And, sure enough, I was not bad. In the beginning it was pencil sketches. Then I decided I'd like to color my drawings and chose watercolors, my favorite kind of art but, (unbeknownst to me) hard to work with. I am currently going through a red barn phase, painting them in all four seasons of the year.

Over the years this new activity has brought me much joy. I am part of a group that meets every Friday morning to do our own "art thing"— there are five of us, and at the close of our sessions we go to lunch, which makes it even more fun. Most of the things I do are copied from pictures that appeal to me, and I usually change them in some way. I do not try to sell, but I give my stuff away and happily get kind words in return. I probably spend way too much time at this activity and my sun room is filled to overflowing with work I've done, but it gives me great pleasure — and that's what it's all about, I think.



Betty with some of her drawings

*Betty Murdock, widow of UU minister Bud Murdock, lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she is a member of All Souls Unitarian Church.*

# Leadership Column

## And Now For Something New...

Tom Schade

**UUMA Connect** is an online resource for Continuing Education for UU ministers, a project of your UUMA CENTER Committee.

Imagine a UUMA where the lines between “insiders” and “outsiders” have been blurred, or even erased. Imagine a UUMA where retired, active and novice ministers are able to participate equally in collaborative learning. That’s the vision of **UUMA Connect**. **UUMA Connect** seeks to combat the isolation that ministers so often experience by fostering an online version of that valuable and holy interaction that comes when we learn and grow together.



Through **UUMA Connect**, more UUMA members will be able to participate in an online continuing education environment than in our present-day in-person system. Meetings, seminars, and conferences are too distant, inconvenient and expensive for many to attend — especially

retired ministers who don’t have expense accounts.

**UUMA Connect** is just a platform. It’s like a school with 1800 students and no faculty. It has very few books in the library now, but its students are all connected to the internet. We are depending on the UUMA membership to help us find the resources that serve their needs. We have curators who are gathering the materials, but we will need members to send in their suggestions. Our curators will sort, tag and post them. And once posted, all of the resources will need critical responses in their associated comments section.

**UUMA Connect** gathers links to a growing collection of internet resources to help ministers become more knowledgeable and skilled in the work of ministry. There are links to articles, videos, on-line courses, seminars and conferences. Some of these resources are from UU sources, but many are from elsewhere.

They are organized into nine groups, which correspond to the Nine Duties of Ministry which were identified by “Fulfilling the Call: A Model for UU Ministers in the 21st Century” — a joint project of the UUA and the UUMA. In each of the areas, there are targeted discussion forums, blogs and chances to comment on the

resources being offered. There are lots of opportunities for collaboration and common learning.

**UUMA Connect** is a platform on which lots of different things can occur. It will be the place where you can see videos of presentations at Ministry Days, or the Institute. It will be a location where video small groups can be organized, such as book discussions. CENTER is hosting some online seminars there this summer and fall.

It is not clear to us yet what will be of interest to retired ministers. We plan to include resources on financial planning and retirement in the section on professional development. Beyond that, it is likely that retired ministers have the same broad range of interests and resources as the rest of the membership. The UUMA as a whole needs the active participation of all of its member ministers.

Enough words: go take a look at it once it “goes live” on May 1. Its web address is [connect.uuma.org](http://connect.uuma.org). You can sign on with your UUMA username and password.

Here are three things you can do to help make **UUMA Connect** a success:

1. Check it out. Sign on and look around. I have written an introductory blog post there, “No Insiders; No Outsiders.” You can leave a comment on it if you wish.
2. Post a picture of yourself on your UUMA membership profile. Faces make collaboration more likely.
3. Send one suggested resource to one of the area curators. Maybe that study group paper you wrote?

*Tom Schade served the First Unitarian Church in Worcester, MA from 1999 through 2012. He now lives in Ann Arbor, MI with his spouse Sue, and two little dogs.*

*Tom serves on the CENTER Committee of the UUMA, holding the portfolio of Continuing Education. He leads the UUMA Connect Implementation Team. .*

*Tom writes at his blog: [The Lively Tradition](http://www.Tomschade.com) at [www.Tomschade.com](http://www.Tomschade.com), where he comments on the intersection of Unitarian Universalism and current events.*



And while we’re thinking about the UUMA... did you know that it has a new logo as well? Here it is:



UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
MINISTERS  
ASSOCIATION

# Partners' Column

## Retiring the Minister's Spouse

**Peter Haslund**

After years of dedicated service to the congregation, the minister announces her/his retirement. There are farewells and a mixture of anxiety and excitement about what next and about who will fill our pulpit. The focus, rightly, is on the minister, but what about the spouse? Whatever will he do? What will be her future relationship to that congregation?

This being the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are no longer bound by the stereotypical image of the minister's spouse as the warm and friendly maker of cookies for the Sunday morning coffee hour. (Perhaps we never were). This may well be a reflection of the gender change that affected our movement in the latter part of the last century, as ever increasing numbers of women assumed the role of minister. When my wife became the minister of the Live Oak UU Congregation in Goleta, California, I made it clear that I wasn't good at making cookies. I offered to participate as an active member of the congregation... within predictable limits.

When she announced her retirement after 18 years of service, I had to think about my future role and how it would change. In that congregation, I had chaired several long-range planning committees leading to the purchase of our property and its development, as well as the planning for our new sanctuary. I had been very active. Somehow, all of that would have to change.

I'm guessing that this was less of a problem when most ministers were men and their spouses stayed in the background. Today, spouses are probably more involved, often more visible in their own right, yet still very much needed in a support role for the minister. In a sense, you act as a team, and when the head of the team leaves, so do you. So now what?

Quite aside from being involved in the life of our congregation, I had always been active in the community, both as a volunteer with non-profits and as a full-time faculty member at our local college. When I finally retired, I accepted a challenge to run for public office... and won!

We continue to be members of our congregation and participate at levels that we feel are appropriate, but how do you know when you approach that ambiguous boundary of inappropriate behavior? I'm not sure I have exhausted my inquiry, but I have thought about it, and I have identified a few specifics:

First and most important, the maturity level of both the departing minister and her/his replacement will be tested. Mature adults won't have a problem developing an honest covenant with each other and the congregation.

This test of maturity applies to the congregation as well. It is the congregation that must figure out its new direction. Some may hang on to the past, but most will take their cue from the interaction of the ministers.

For those who have attained "a certain age," there will be an array of options, unfettered by society's demands but reflective of both what our values dictate and what our health allows. We are asked to make choices, based on some inner voice that leads us to where we want to be.

It's probably good to listen.



Bets Wienecke and Peter Haslund

*Peter Haslund is married to the Rev. Bets Wienecke, Minister Emerita of the Live Oak UU Congregation of Goleta, CA. He served as President of the PSWD Board as well as on the UUA Board of Trustees from 1984-1992. He retired as Professor of Political Science and Global Studies in 2009 and currently serves as an elected member of the Board of Trustees for the Santa Barbara Community College District.*



## From the Treasurer

Paul L'Herrou

Our national economy is going through a transition, one characteristic being extreme income inequality, with a small number of super-rich enjoying obscene levels of wealth. At the other end of the scale are people trying to get by on jobs paying a minimum wage, which has not kept up with inflation.

While not as extreme, members of UURMaPA are a microcosm of income inequality — between comfort and want. Some of us found our way to comfortable ministerial incomes, with accompanying ability to build our UUA retirement plans to levels that give us some degree of security for our retirement years. (If we had higher incomes during our working years, we also now enjoy higher Social Security benefits.) Others of us have non-ministerial resources that have led to a financially comfortable level of retirement. However, for various reasons, there are many of us who were unable to build an adequate level of retirement funding and now find ourselves barely getting by.

You have recently received our spring letter asking for your financial support of UURMaPA. If you are financially insecure and can afford to donate only a small amount, or perhaps nothing at all, please do not feel uncomfortable or embarrassed. The UURMaPA leadership is very aware of the financial precariousness of many of our members. If you find yourself in need of financial assistance, please speak with your Caring Network Coordinator or with Linda Rose at the UUA. The UUA has the ability to provide some emergency aid, and either Linda or your Caring Coordinator can put you in touch with longer-term sources of aid for clergy and partners or surviving partners. Also, if you would like to attend a UURMaPA conference, but it would put a strain on your budget, please do not hesitate to ask for scholarship assistance.

On the other hand, if you are among the financially secure, please be generous when thinking in terms of supporting UURMaPA, knowing that our far-flung community of retired colleagues, partners, and survivors is a support to all of us, regardless of ability to provide financial support.

## IARF Congress, 2014

You are invited to Birmingham, England, with bonus trips to Coventry and Northern Ireland. We'll begin August 20-23 with the International Association of Liberal Religious Women in Birmingham, followed by the 34th Congress of the IARF, where Karen Armstrong will be the keynote speaker. Then from August 27-31, Chris Hudson will lead Peacemaking Training in Northern Ireland. Inquire with Richard Boeke, Chair, for more information: [www.iarf.net](http://www.iarf.net) or [r.boeke@virgin.net](mailto:r.boeke@virgin.net).

## News About General Assembly

### Retirement: Why? When? How? Where?

UURMaPA President Dick Gilbert and Vice-President Jim Eller will lead a discussion of how best to retire from active ministry during the Collegial Conversations time slot at this year's Ministry Day at General Assembly. "Why should I consider retirement? When is the right time? What are best practices? Where will I live?" Spiritual, intellectual and emotional preparation is at least as important as financial preparation. Please join us Tuesday, June 24 from 2:45 to 4:15 and share your experiences of retirement, and please *especially* invite your colleagues who are considering retirement.

### Please Join Us for Lunch

Each year at General Assembly, we offer a ritual of welcome and invite key UUA staff to address our luncheon gathering of UURMaPA members. All UURMaPAs are welcome to join us on Thursday, June 26 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Biltmore Salon 2. Vegetarian options will be offered. Pre-registration is required, and the cost of the luncheon is \$25.

If you or your ministerial partner are retiring this year, please plan to attend this event as a guest of UURMaPA. There will be no charge to our guests.

The program will include a brief speech by UURMaPA President Dick Gilbert, presentation of our new members, greetings from UUA staff, and presentation of the Creative Sage-ing Award.

Please make your reservations by June 9 with Jim Eller, 215 S. Margene Drive, Midwest City, OK 73130 or [wjimeller@gmail.com](mailto:wjimeller@gmail.com).



### A Reminder About Emergency Contacts

I've been noticing the number of TV ads for "Lifeline" or other products that connect us with an emergency service if we slip in the bathtub or fall down some stairs. It makes me aware that I need to assure myself that if I take ill or fall, I've got emergency numbers of friends, neighbors or family posted in a prominent place in my house.

How about you? Have you taken care of this important information? If you're attending church, have you let your minister know whom to contact should you be taken seriously ill or hurt? Do you have a "contact" name and number in your purse or wallet?

I don't want to sound pushy, but I want you to do it, if you haven't already. Do it today! If you're like me, the thought will have dropped out of mind by tomorrow!

— Liz McMaster

UURMaPA Board Member At-Large  
Caring Network Assistant Coordinator



## July Civil Rights Journey in Mississippi

Does July in Mississippi sound like just what you'd want? Sure! Fifty years ago hundreds of volunteers went to Mississippi in late June and stayed through July and August. Their experiences in the Mississippi

Summer Project, popularly called "Freedom Summer," changed them and changed our nation.

This July you can join UURMAPA member Gordon Gibson on a Mississippi Journey co-sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice and the Living Legacy Project. From July 5-12 Gordon and two other highly qualified leaders will guide a multi-generational group on visits to civil rights sites and conversations with civil rights veterans. If you have a high school age grandchild, this might be a trip to take together with that member of the up-and-coming generation so that they learn about some of the events of our era.

The registration deadline is May 19, so hustle to the College of Social Justice website (<http://uucsj.org/youth/civil-rights-journey/>) to get details and register.

— Gordon Gibson  
Knoxville, TN

## Sunny Orlando, Florida in February Save the dates: February 24-26, 2015

What an enticing thought! For the better part of three days, come and enjoy time with wonderful colleagues in this first way-south UURMaPA conference. We'll be staying at the San Pedro Retreat Center, with its lovely grounds, beautiful chapel, and even sandhill cranes. Your Board is busy planning the conference; you just have to save the date. More detailed information will be offered in the Summer issue of *Elderberries*.

And by all means consider staying longer. There are the many tourist attractions of course. But there's also the natural beauty of Florida. Consider kayaking on the St. Johns River, visiting the manatee at Wekiva Springs, heading to the beach, or taking a short drive to the Spiritualist community of Cassadaga and having a reading.

— Marni Harmony  
Local Arrangements



## New Members

The following people have joined UURMaPA since our last newsletter went out February 1. The best contact information will always be found in the on-line Directory, which is updated approximately monthly. From our web site, [www.uurmapa.org](http://www.uurmapa.org), go to the Publications page, scroll down, and click on the image of the Directory. The ID is UU-SAGE and the Password is WISDOM.

Randolph Becker	Olivia Holmes
Danielle DiBona	Christine Jaronski
Wendy Fish	Phyllis O'Connell
Wendy Fitting	Susan Rak
Bill and Barbara	Marc Salkin
Hamilton-Holway	Amy Samonds
Barbro Hansson	

## Calls for Nominations

We have been underwhelmed with the response to the request for nominations for the two awards below, published in the Winter issue. Please give some thought to who, among your retired colleagues and partners, best fits the descriptions below for people who deserve to be recognized.

### Creative Sage-ing Award

UURMaPA's annual Creative Sage-ing Award recognizes members for outstanding service and creativity in pursuing new ventures after retirement. Such ventures might include publication and other creative work, community service, and mentoring. Last year's honorees were **Farley and Virginia Wheelwright**. The winner(s) will be announced at General Assembly in Providence and awarded a cash prize of \$500.

Send your nomination, together with your rationale for making it, to:

Jim Eller, 215 S. Margene Dr., Midwest City, OK 73130  
or [wjimeller@gmail.com](mailto:wjimeller@gmail.com).

### UURMaPA Unsung Hero Award

Every organization has people who work behind the scenes to make the group successful. UURMaPA is no exception! Help the board to identify this year's "unsung hero." Last year's honoree was **Iska Cole**. The award is to go to someone who has not previously been publicly recognized — minister, partner or spouse, or couple. The honoree for 2014 will be announced at either General Assembly in Providence or the Attleboro Fall Conference, and will be awarded a cash prize of \$500.

Send your nomination, together with your rationale for making it, to John Weston, 35 Winfield Road, Providence, RI 02906 or [johnhweston@gmail.com](mailto:johnhweston@gmail.com).

**UURMaPA FALL CONFERENCE**  
**September 30 to October 2, 2014,**  
**La Salette Conference Center, Attleboro, MA**



Daniel Lord Smail

Our theme for the program is “Deep History: Why It Matters.” Our speaker is Daniel Lord Smail, Professor of History at Harvard University. He has won numerous awards for his books and many accolades for his most recent book, *Deep History and the Brain*.

Mr. Smail will be with us for the morning on Wednesday. We encourage you to consider reading *Deep History and the Brain* in preparation for our time together, particularly the third chapter, “Between Darwin and Lamarck.”

We will, of course, offer the usual activities: worship services, an Odyssey, diverse small groups on Wednesday afternoon, a Book Table, an Arts and Crafts Table, a business meeting, an opportunity to write cards to those among us needing our caring thoughts, and lots of time for socializing!

The full conference registration remains at \$195/person (includes 2 overnights, 6 meals, snacks & beverages, the program, worship services, and Odyssey). The commuter registration is \$105/person (includes everything listed above except the 2 overnights). See page 19 for registration form.

When Joel receives your registration he will send you a confirmation with directions on how to get to La Salette Conference Center. We will continue to send out e-mails to those on our e-mail lists every 4-5 weeks with more detailed information as we have it to give to you.

Put the dates on your calendars now. Register early. Last year we ran out of rooms!

Joel and I are looking forward to another stimulating and fun filled experience between colleagues and partners surrounded by the beautiful fall colors of New England.

In excitement and anticipation,

Carol Taylor, Co-Chair: [catuuminr@verison.net](mailto:catuuminr@verison.net)  
610-296-0762

Joel Weaver, Co-Chair: [weaver\\_je@hotmail.com](mailto:weaver_je@hotmail.com)  
610-296-0762

## Nominating Report

In the last edition of *Elderberries*, the Nominating Committee reported its nominees for the UURMaPA Board and Nominating Committee whose two-year terms begin July, 2014. No other nominations for Board or Nominating Committee positions were made by our membership, so the slate presented is duly elected according to our by-laws. We appreciate all the talent, time and commitment these members contribute to the vibrancy of our organization.

Welcome new Board members:

Judy Gibson, Secretary  
Joel Weaver, Treasurer

Thanks to incumbent Board members

Judy Welles, *Elderberries* Editor;  
John Weston, Member-at-Large

And thanks to incumbent Nominating Committee members, Chris Lilly Backus and Sheldon Bennett.

Continuing on the Board are: President, Dick Gilbert; Vice President, Jim Eller; Caring Network Chair, Margi Nasemann; Members-at-Large, Liz McMaster and Doug Gallager.

Your Nominating Committee  
Nancy Doughty, Chair;  
Chris Backus, Sheldon Bennett

## The Bucket List

**Harry Green** - Find someone to take a road trip with me covering Civil War battlefields in North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and finally returning to the south through Georgia, esp. Atlanta.

What is probably more in the bucket list category would be a long river boat trip (with a Civil War emphasis) down the Mississippi, all the way south to New Orleans.

**Judy Welles** - A knitting cruise with a good teacher and a huge stash of yarn. Coast of Maine, Alaska, the Baltic Sea — I’m not particular.

Touring an interesting city (maybe even my own home town) on a Segway — it looks like so much fun!

**Stephen Shick** - To live one day fully awake, alive and mindful of every moment. In spite of considerable effort to accomplish this, it has remained elusive. Even with a good start with morning meditation and mindful excursive writing, I have only made it to noon before dropping into the numbness of some routine task. If one day in the future I make it to late afternoon I think I will declare victory and take a nap, a mindless (conscious mind, that is) act of gratitude.



## The Book Page

### Farley Wheelwright Tells Tales Twice

Farley Wheelwright writes, “My publisher is encouraging me to let all my friends, family and acquaintances know about my book, *TWICE-TOLD TALES: A Collection of 21 Sermons*. Having delivered — and listened to — many sermons during my lifetime, I felt that this collection would be useful for both new and experienced ministers, and would be a memento for those people who remember me from days of yore. The collection represents what I feel are my best sermons.

The book is available on Amazon.com in both print and Kindle versions. If you don't have a Kindle, it's easy to download a free app that you can use to read the book on your computer.

And please post an HONEST review if you're so inclined. Reviews help a book get noticed, too.

I certainly enjoyed my trip down Memory Lane, and feel the sentiments expressed are as timely today as they were when I first put them to paper. In some cases, this isn't a good thing: we still have racism, wars, and a poor education system, and we still struggle with finding meaning for our lives.

I do hope you'll enjoy the book.”

### The Need for Personal and Societal Transformation

When a tragic development derailed her life in 1997 — a hip replacement that went badly awry, leading to numerous complications and ultimately compelling her to retire early from the UU ministry — Rosemarie Carnarius was too devastated to contemplate that this might be precisely what was needed to fulfill a call no less powerful than her call to ministry.

Today the results of laboring under sometimes excruciating circumstances are five books on the urgent need for personal and societal transformation. They are written by one who experienced WWII as a child, grew up under East German communism, escaped at 17, experienced democracy first in West Germany and later in the U.S., and has anguished over the deplorable decline of American values since the crimes of 9/11.

The titles of her works are: *Envisioning a New World: Awakening to Life's Oneness; Liberating Masculine and Feminine — Breaking the Spell of Exclusion; One Light, One Spirit — a Guide to Transformed Living; The Ultimate Choice: Armageddon or Awakening; and Humanity at a Crossroads: Which Way Home?* All of them are available on [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) in both paperback and Kindle format.

Her writing has been described as “provocative and profound,” perhaps because Rosemarie considers herself

a revolutionary of both the outer world of sociopolitical issues and the inner world of spiritual realities.

If you are interested in reviewing one of her books, she'd be delighted to send you a copy. You can reach her at [spiritrc@aol.com](mailto:spiritrc@aol.com).

### Working for Peace

Rudi Gelsey's book, *Mending Our Broken World: a Path to Perpetual Peace*, was favorably reviewed in the March 2014 edition of the *International Journal on World Peace*. The book can be purchased through his organization Perpetual Peace Initiative, found on line at: [www.mendingourbrokenworld.com](http://www.mendingourbrokenworld.com).

Rudi and his organization have posted a petition titled “Self-destruction? or a Peaceful World!” He hopes you will want to sign it yourself and help spread the word. [Go To Petition](#)

### Letters to the Unborn Kin of the Future

Two years ago, Sam Wright published a memoir, *The Way It Was: Letters to Unborn Posterity*, written in letter form to his adult kin about 100 years into the future. Each letter starts in the present, then reflects on his past and asks questions about the future. “I didn't want to make my letters any longer than my fingers usually scribble out, which is about three or four pages. And above all, I wanted to keep them as personal as if we were sitting down together talking to each other.”

Sam's other books are *Koviashuvik: A Time and Place of Joy* and *Edge of Tomorrow: An Arctic Year*. They are available on Amazon.com.



### Getting a Life

Lex Crane has written several books that are available on Amazon: *Love, Sex, and the Human Condition: Getting a Life* and *Underlying Unity: New Perspectives on the Philosophy of UU Religion*.

### Gaining Insight into the Gospel of Mark

In his newest book, *The Seminal Gospel: Forty Days with Mark*, Kim Beach invites us to see how this ancient text enables us to name God in our contemporary experience. This book is an exploration of Mark and an extended personal reflection on what his telling of the story of Jesus can mean to us today.

For inquiries, contact the author at [gkbeach@aol.com](mailto:gkbeach@aol.com). It is also available on Amazon.com and at Barnes and Noble.

# Turning of Our Lives

“As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.”

— Proverbs 25: 25

**Jose Ballester** is in rehab to gain strength through physical therapy so he will be ready for hip replacement surgery later in the spring. He can be reached at [joseballester@mac.com](mailto:joseballester@mac.com) or 781/264-3511.



Dwight and Marie Brown Conference Center, U bar U Retreat Center, Kerrville, TX

**Marie Brown**, widow of the Rev. Dwight Brown, is very, very active in her church, the UU Church of Hill Country in Kerrville, TX. She says that living near the church helps with her multi-tasking volunteer work there.

Marie is also very busy with a conference center a few miles outside of Kerrville — the U bar U Retreat and Conference Center. A third building at the center will soon be ready for use and will fly under the flag: The Dwight & Marie Brown Conference Center. (Why not book your next conference at a real Unitarian Universalist religious and educational retreat center? For more information go to [ubaru.org](http://ubaru.org).)

**Lex Crane** writes from Santa Barbara, “We are now in our early 90s. **Ginny** is active with help from many meds, while I have reached an advanced stage of decrepitude. I am in good condition except for serious back problems, so an electric scooter takes me around our retirement community, Valle Verde.” Lex keeps busy writing (see p. 11) while Ginny continues with volunteering at Valle Verde, the local Unitarian church, and the League of Women Voters. Their oldest son, Jack, has developed a splendid website for Lex, which will soon be ready to go online.

**Jim Eller’s** wife, the Rev. **Jeannie Hines**, is a minister in the United Methodist Church. The good news is that she is recovering well from a broken arm caused by a fall on ice this past winter. Even better, Jeannie has just been selected to be the new minister at St. Stephen’s UMC with an average Sunday attendance of 250 and a membership of 600. Jim writes, “We are excited to be moving to Norman, the most liberal town in the most conservative state in the Union.”

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Stillwater, Oklahoma has honored the Rev. **Carol Fincher** with a new title: Minister Emerita. Two weeks later Carol also received a brand new right knee. She surely appreciates both of these gifts, and reports all’s well at the Stillwater church where she still stays involved with some of the committees — particularly Pastoral Care.

UURMAPA NJ/NY members will have an opportunity to hear **Joyce Gilbert** sing on May 7 in Carnegie Hall with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in Howard Hanson’s “Merry Mount,” an opera in concert.

**Jim and Betty Grant** write from San Diego, CA “As might be expected for our age group (Jim is 78 and Betty is 80), we have some minor health challenges. Betty’s Parkinson’s is pretty well controlled by medication; Jim sees the cardiologist regularly. We swim 3 mornings a week, and try to walk 2 or 3 mornings a week, so doing okay.” Their family gathered in Palm Springs the 3rd weekend in March for “the 80/30 Event.” Betty celebrated her 80th; their granddaughter her 30th. “Oh my, *tempus* really does *fugit!*”

**Betty Howard**, widow of the Rev. Ernest Howard, retired to her hometown, Austin, TX and loves her own apartment in an assisted living complex. She also loves her minister, Meg Barnhouse, and First UU Church in Austin, which is growing and growing. Four of her adult children also live in Austin and are there for her at any time she needs them, including rides to church. The rent from a duplex she and Ernest bought many years ago in anticipation of retiring in Austin subsidises her income. Betty is a very happy camper.

**Fred and Marge Keip** retired in January from their part-time position as ministers of the Grants Pass, Oregon congregation. During their tenure, the Keips helped the church find a permanent home in a visible location, giving them room to grow.

Before he retired in 2006, **Tom Korson** served as the chaplain in a homeless shelter/transitional community for the homeless in Denver for nine years. He has a blog: [apocryphalpress.com](http://apocryphalpress.com), “your best source for the news that didn’t happen.” He finds endless



Marge and Fred Keip

varieties of material for the political satire which he loves to write. It goes out by e-mail, and it also can be read online. If you are interested, write to him at [TKinDenver@Comcast.com](mailto:TKinDenver@Comcast.com).

**Robert T. Latham** writes, “Although I have been on the rolls for a number of years I have not been what might be called ‘retired.’ Perhaps that will happen this year since I have achieved age 82 in December. I have a consulting service and continue to do workshops and speaking engagements in both America and Canada. I just returned this summer from serving two years as the Interim District Executive for the Pacific Central District and the work appears to be slowing down.”

**Ellen Livingston** (Claremont, CA) has been retired for 8 years and feels healthy at 80. **Nick** is too, except for mild cognitive impairment the doctor calls it — sometimes mild, sometimes not. She is active in their UU sangha, attends church, sometimes helps with adult education and Sunday school. Nick is finishing a novel, and Ellen is reviewing American Transcendentalism in preparation as theme speaker at PSWIRL this summer. They have many good friends and support, although their kids are scattered in North Carolina, New York, and Chicago.

**Doe Lockwood**, widow of the Rev. Russell Lockwood, has had many, many years of church service at both Hope and All Souls Unitarian Churches in Tulsa, Oklahoma. (Over 25 at All Souls, including twice on the staff; and 25 more at Hope, twice as its president). But the greatest joy was serving on the board of UURMaPA. “I encourage all readers of this message to say ‘Yes’ when the nominating committee calls on you.”

**Ken Maclean** moved from Cathedral City to Palm Springs in June and three days later left for three months. He took part in two family weddings, spent a week at Cedar Lane just before Abhi Janamanchi arrived as their new minister, then visited Boston, where he saw **Gene Navias** (who is living at Rogerson House) and stayed with **Dick Kellaway**. He then went to England for two months, including a 12-day cruise from Venice, ending up in Athens. He has been home since early October, getting settled in his new home with good help from friends.

**Barbara Nagel**, widow of the Rev. Kyle Nagle, assisted him with his writing for six years before his death: essays, journals, sermons, lots of poetry, etc. Unfortunately they have not yet been published. In the meantime, Barbara shares a house in Spring, TX with her son and daughter-in-law and awaits the birth of her first great-grandchild. Her current greatest joy, she says, is “getting my fingernails done and also a pedicure at the same time.” She enjoys hearing from everybody and hopes to hear from you soon at 281/370-0125.

UURMAPA NJ/NY gathered on March 25 at the home of **Barbara and Paul Ratzlaff**, including a reunion of Paul and long-time friend and colleague **Allen Wells**. Barbara left early (before the photo!) in order to catch a plane for Florida for an important visit with her father.



L to R: Jim Wentz, Sue Nichols, Vern Nichols, Paul Ratzlaff, Allen Wells



Clockwise from lower L: Emily Palmer, Peter Richardson, David Rigg, Elena Rigg, Eleanor Richardson

**Peter and Eleanor Richardson** enjoyed getting together with other Florida UURMaPAns for lunch in Naples, FL in February. Others present included **Emily Palmer** and **David and Elena Rigg**. Not only was the lunch delicious, but the walks on the beach were even better!

**Catherine and Bob Ross** live in Sugarland, TX where Catherine is greatly limited due to her Parkinson’s disease and Bob is the primary care giver. Bob describes himself as a Universalist Christian and attends a nearby Presbyterian church..

**Donna Lee and Sam Wright** still go to Alaska each spring from their winter home in southern Arizona near the Mexican border. They have adult children and grandchildren living on 34 acres they own communally, about 100 miles north of Anchorage. For the first time in 25 years, they didn’t continue to their home north of the Arctic Circle in the Brooks Range; at 94, Sam thought it was too remote to take the chance. He is still very fit, both of them doing 1/2 hour of yoga every morning, and Sam taking 3 or 4 half-hour walks each day. His biggest challenge seems to be memory.

**Sarah York** and **Chuck Campbell** enjoy life on their goat farm near Asheville, NC. Sarah also does Spiritual Direction and is the UUA Consultant for Ethics in Congregational Life. Chuck is Chair of the Board of CarePartners, a local provider of health care, including hospice, rehab, and home health.



Sarah and Peregrine

## *In Memoriam*

*Longer and more detailed versions of all obituaries can be found on the UURMaPA web site at <http://www.uurmapa.org/obituaries.html>. No password is necessary to access that page. Many thanks to Chris Lilly Backus and Jay Atkinson for their careful and sensitive work writing the partners' and ministers' obituaries, respectively.*

**The Rev. Suzanne Black**, parish minister, educator of the disadvantaged, and devoted dog lover, died on February 10, 2014 after a brief illness.

For most of her working life, she was dependent on leg braces and crutches, due to a serious spinal injury suffered during a rock-climbing outing. She later became more dependent on what she called her "power chair," and repeatedly insisted that it was not an "electric chair!" She always had several dogs as pets, and considered the dogs to be family.

Susan Trappe Black was born August 28, 1942 in Alexandria, WV. She earned a B.A. in 1965 and an M.A. in 1967 from the University of Illinois. While working at the Boulder River School and Hospital in Boulder, MT, she became active in nearby Helena's Big Sky UU Fellowship, eventually enrolling at Starr King School for the Ministry, earning her M.Div. in 1990.

Returning to Montana, Ms. Black was ordained by the UU congregations of Helena, Billings, Bozeman, Idaho Falls, and Missoula Montana in the tiny and evocatively-named town of Pray, Montana. She served interim ministries in PA and AR, and an extension ministry in NV. In 1997 she was called as parish minister to the UU Church in Mission Viejo, CA until 2000, when she moved to a final interim ministry in Little Falls, New York. In retirement, she returned to the desert she loved in southwest Arizona.

Family and friends gathered for a meal of remembrance on February 22, 2014 in Bloomington, IL and on Feb. 28 in the clubhouse of her Quarzite, AZ housing community.

Suzanne's second husband Gary died in 2010. She is survived by her sister, Judith May; brother, Theodore Black; and several nieces and nephews.

Notes of condolence may be sent to Judy May, Box 2100 RR 1, Corner Brook, Newfoundland, A2H 2N2 Canada.



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**Priscilla Alden Jones Brooks**, 84, wife of the Rev. George Gordon Brooks, died January 21 in Port Charlotte, FL. Priscilla was native of Amherst, MA. Early on she was secretary to the Amherst Town Manager, then secretary to the Admissions Officer at Deerfield Academy, and to the Communications Officer at the Massachusetts Council of Churches in Boston. Later she became a teacher's assistant in the Elyria, OH school system. The work she loved most was as owner of the Wool and Needle Studio in Burlington, IA. She taught knitting at all levels for the night school at Burlington High.

George says Priscilla's most significant contribution to his ministry was to be his eyes and ears on the congregation. He says "She was the perfect minister's wife! And she loved it!" She enjoyed retreats at Attleboro, MA and UU in the Pines at Brooksville, FL as well as weeks on Star Island.

She was predeceased by two brothers, Carleton Parker Jones II and the Reverend Robert Edward Jones. She leaves two nephews, Carleton Parker Jones III and Edmund Adams Jones; and a niece, Catherine Leete Jones Randall; and numerous grand- and great-grand nieces and nephews. At the time of her death, she was a member of the UU Fellowship of Charlotte County, the Rounders at Maple Leaf Golf and Country Club and the Peace River Harvard Club.

Her memorial service took place at the UU Fellowship of Charlotte County. Condolences may go to George Brooks at 2100 Kings Hwy. # 347, Port Charlotte, FL 33980.





**The Rev. Dr. William “Bill” Houff**, dedicated parish minister, activist, devoted husband, and lover of the farming life and land from his youth, died on January 26, 2014 in Spokane, WA.

William Harper Houff was born April 27, 1928 near the village of New Hope, Virginia. After earning B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees in chemistry, and working in the corporate world for several years, Dr. Houff was drawn to Unitarian Universalist ministry, earning a B.D. at Starr King School for the Ministry in 1964.

Ordained by the UU Fellowship of Redwood City, CA in 1964, the Rev. Mr. Houff served that congregation until 1968, subsequently serving churches in Shoreline and Spokane, WA., followed by several interim ministries. It was in Spokane that Bill met his third wife, Patricia “Patty” Meagher McTigue, to whom he was married for more than thirty-five years until her death in 2012.

In his Spokane ministry, he began preaching about spiritual growth and mysticism. His book, *Infinity in Your Hand: A Guide for the Spiritually Curious*, was republished under the UUA’s Skinner House imprint in 1990 and has been widely used for adult study in UU congregations.

Mr. Houff was active in service with the wider Unitarian Universalist network and with his colleagues in the UUMA. His commitment to social justice brought him to Alabama for the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery, and later to protesting against the Vietnam War. In later years, Bill and Patty were both active in community activities; Bill was honored for his service as a volunteer chaplain for Hospice of Spokane.

Bill Houff is survived by sons Konrad Crist and Gregory and Robert Houff, and by several grandchildren and stepchildren, one of whom, Patty’s daughter Kathleen McTigue, is also a UU minister.

His memorial service was celebrated on February 12, 2014, at the Unitarian Church of Spokane. Notes of condolence may be sent to Greg Houff, 1002 Golden Hills Drive, Cheney, WA 99004.

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**The Rev. Dr. Gordon “Bucky” McKeeman**, passionate Universalist, beloved mentor, devoted institutionalist, lover of life, of humanity, and of ministry, died at age 93 on December 18, 2013, in Rochester, MN.

Gordon received his ministry degree in 1945 from the Universalist School of Religion at Tufts University. He was first called to serve All Souls Universalist Church of Worcester, MA, where he was ordained in 1945. He went on to serve two other congregations in MA, and then the UU Church of Akron, OH, where he was named Minister Emeritus in 1983. He became President of Starr King School for the Ministry in 1983, doing so faithfully until 1988.

He was a charter member of *The Humiliati*, “the humble ones,” a group of Tufts students and alumni. When the group disbanded, he joined *The Fraters of the Wayside Inn*, a ministerial study group in which Gordon advocated for admission of women, a step finally realized in 1989.



The Rev Mr. McKeeman engaged in civic life with zeal, holding various offices on the Unity Community Council, and on the board of the Akron Rotary Club; he founded the Fair Housing Contact Service, and founded the Planned Parenthood chapter of Akron.

Heavily invested in and committed to Universalist tradition and institutions, Gordon McKeeman served in numerous positions for UU and ministerial organizations. He received the Angus H. MacLean Award from the UUA in 1982, and he and Phyllis were jointly honored with the UUA Distinguished Service Award in 1993.

Gordon is survived by his wife of 69 years, Phyllis; sons, Bruce, Glenn, and Randall; four grandchildren; and sister, Gloria King. A memorial service was conducted by the Rev. Dr. Carol Hepokoski on December 29, 2013, at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester, MN.

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**The Rev. Margo McKenna**, a lifelong seeker whose religious restlessness led her from social work to ministry, from Seventh-day Adventism to Unitarian Universalism, from Christianity to skepticism and thence back to a reconsidered theism, and whose torments drove her from doubt to hope and finally to despair, died sadly by her own hand on February 16, 2014 at age 53.



As a parish minister, Margo McKenna was radically welcoming and inclusive in a congregation whose political diversity required greater sensitivity than many UU ministers are called upon to exercise.

She was born in Ontario, Canada, on November 22, 1960 to Henry and Frieda Mattson. She was graduated from Andrews University with a BSW in 1983 and from Loma Linda University with an MSW, earning her M.Div. in 1988 from Princeton Theological Seminary. Female clergy were controversial in Seventh-day Adventism, but Margo was one of the first women ordained to the SDA ministry on July 6, 1996, after having served as associate minister at several Seventh-day Adventist churches in CA.



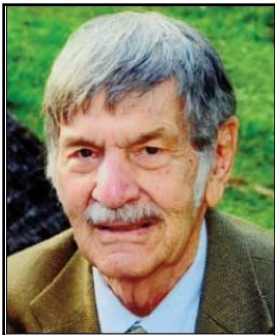
In 1998, Ms. McKenna began exploring Unitarian Universalism. After receiving UUA ministerial fellowship in November, 2000, the Rev. Ms. McKenna was called to Chalice UU Congregation of Escondido, CA in 2001, serving there until 2010. She spent her last five years in hospice settings throughout Southern CA and MI, while pursuing painting and developing an avid interest in photography.

Her conviction of religion as a force for social good and equality was lived out in her many commitments to public and interfaith work. Colleagues remember how she would arrive at ministerial gatherings with her tiny canine companion, Gita, peeking out of her purse or from inside her jacket.

Margo is survived by sisters Melodie Mattson-Bell and Marlene Harris, a brother, Morris Mattson; her mother, Frieda Mattson, and eight nieces and nephews. A memorial service was held on 15 March 2014 at the Chalice Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Escondido, CA.

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**The Rev. J. David Scheyer**, parish minister, zealous fighter for justice, and dedicated volunteer and counselor, died on February 7, 2014.



John David Scheyer was born in Philadelphia on April 28, 1928 to Dr. Frederick L. Scheyer and Synette Swensen Scheyer. College attendance at Princeton University, Reed College, and UC Berkeley was interrupted by service (1951-53) as a Marine during the Korean conflict. By his early 30s, Mr. Scheyer was living in Billings, MT working in drug sales to physicians. There he discovered the Billings Unitarian Fellowship and quickly became an active member. Soon ministry began to call to him, so he went to Berkeley and was graduated from Starr King School for the Ministry in 1967.

He served the UU Church of Ft. Lauderdale, where he was ordained on February 9, 1968, then served in a yoked ministry in FL until 1976. After calls in RI and MA, the Rev Mr. Scheyer held a series of interim ministries in MA, NC, SC, and TX.

Mr. Scheyer's ministerial career was brought unexpectedly to an end in early February, 1990, when he went missing for nearly three months in an episode of amnesia. Reconnected eventually with his birth family in WA, and his wife Fia who had returned to Boston after his disappearance, Mr. Scheyer seems to have gradually recovered.

Relocating with his wife to Franklin, North Carolina, he joined the UU Fellowship. The Rev. Mr. Scheyer was deeply concerned about domestic violence, spending many nights in hospitals talking with domestic violence victims and offering comfort and companionship. Sadly, Fia was killed in a car accident in December, 2013, just two months before his own death.

David Scheyer is survived by his brother, Warner; three step-children, eight grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. His life was celebrated in a memorial service led by Walter Burnett on February 22 at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Franklin, North Carolina.

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**Mary Ann Shokes** died in Lansing, MI, on February 5, 2014 at the age of 83. She is survived by her two sons, Ted (Jr.) and Doug, and two grandchildren.

Mary Ann married Theodore (Ted) Wilson Shokes in Charleston, SC, when she was 18. The young couple moved from SC to Boston, MA, in 1960, where Ted attended Tufts Theological Seminary and later became a UUA minister. Before her marriage, Mary Ann had completed a year in the College of Charleston as a psychology major. She left school to marry and have children. She would later share in the UUA adventure that would define her life until 1971, when Ted died in Hinsdale, IL.

Mary Ann plummeted into a deep depression and remained there for a few years, causing some to speculate she herself would not long survive her husband's demise. She surprised everyone by rejoining life fully in the mid-1970s in Lansing,

MI. She returned to college, received an AA in Social Work, and later worked at Michigan National Bank in Lansing before retiring in the late 1980s.

In the mid-2000s, Mary Ann was admitted to a Lansing hospital while suffering from a serious illness. She entered a vegetative state and was on life support, and EEGs showed minimal brain activity. Her sons were advised she would never regain consciousness. While her younger son was visiting her and talking with her personal aide about her condition, the aide began sobbing. When her son looked over at his mother, she was smiling back at him. A few months later, she was again living independently. She had surprised everyone again, including the entire ICU staff at the hospital, by making a full recovery.

She will be remembered for her wisdom, and of course for her perseverance, but she will be remembered mostly for her kindness.

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**Gertrude (Trudi) Burtless Widrick**, 86, wife of the Rev. Dr. Eugene (Woody) R. Widrick, died May 18, 2013. As a young woman she attended the Universalist Church in Cortland, NY, then served by Jim and Jane Hunt. Jane introduced Trudi to Woody, a young catalog librarian from Cortland State University, while Jim urged Woody to join the ministry. When the couple married, Woody began studies at Crane Theological School at Tufts. Trudi worked at Beacon Press and later in Tufts Accounting Department. The couple served four congregations and then settled in Carlisle, MA, where she worked for 16 years as payroll supervisor and managed the bosses' mail at Assurance Technology, a high tech company in town. The Widricks served First Religious Society of Carlisle (MA) for 24 years. Trudi was a good listener, a caring presence and a lay minister as needed.



Despite her long hours, Trudi took pride in perfecting her lemon meringue pie recipe. She enjoyed playing bridge, traveling, and dining monthly with the Beautiful Ladies Lunch Bunch. She loved Agatha Christie mysteries, liked to knit and do crosswords. A skilled origami practitioner, she loved cats and was devoted to her dachshund, Hexenhammer. She also liked to collect autumn leaves. Her family says she detested chickens because of having to collect eggs as a child on a farm.

She was predeceased by her foster daughter, Pam Harrington. She is survived by her son, Nathan; daughter-in-law, Allison; and daughter, Nancie Salguero; by four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Notes of condolence may go to Eugene Widrick, 11 Porter St., Billerica, MA 01821.



No, no, there is no going back.  
Less and less you are  
that possibility you were.  
More and more you have become  
those lives and deaths  
that have belonged to you.  
You have become a sort of grave  
containing much that was  
and is no more in time, beloved  
then, now, and always.  
And so you have become a sort of tree  
standing over the grave.  
Now more than ever you can be  
generous toward each day  
that comes, young, to disappear  
forever, and yet remain  
unaging in the mind.  
Every day you have less reason  
not to give yourself away.

~ Wendell Berry ~

## UURMaPA Fall Conference Registration

September 30 – October 2, 2014

La Salette Center, Attleboro, MA



Please register me/us for the UURMaPA @ Attleboro Conference. I enclose **\$195** per person. This fee covers the program, a single room (bath shared with another single room) for two (2) nights, six (6) meals, social time refreshments, and general expenses. The fee for conference attendees not staying at the La Salette Center overnight is **\$105** per person.

Name/s: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate any special needs, dietary or otherwise: \_\_\_\_\_

Check payable to "UURMaPA @ Attleboro" enclosed in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION FORM AND CHECK** must be received no later than **September 9th, 2014**.

Mail this form and your check to: **Joel Weaver**

**104 Amity Dr.**

**Wayne, PA 19087**

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:** Determine the amount of assistance that you require to attend the conference.

Remember to include costs for travel, caregiver for a dependent partner, etc. in addition to the registration fee in your request. Contact Paul L'Herrou.

Email: **paulherrou@gmail.com** phone: **(978) 290-7285**

**Note:** La Salette Center's toilets and showers in the sleeping quarters are not wheelchair accessible; however, it is only a few steps from the sleeping room to the toilet. There are wheelchair accessible toilets on the first floor and there is an elevator for access to the sleeping floors and chapel.

**Confirmation** of your reservation and directions to the La Salette Center will be sent to you upon receipt of your registration form and check.

**Questions? Concerns?** Feel free to contact Joel Weaver.

Email: **weaver\_je@hotmail.com** Phone: **(610) 296-0762** Cell Phone: **(267) 566-2386**

**Unitarian Universalist Retired  
Ministers & Partners Association  
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Corvallis, OR 97330**

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