



Elderberries

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Vern and Sue Nichols Receive Unsung UURMaPAn Award

The Unsung UURMaPAn Award is given each year to an UURMaPA member or couple who has not been recognized otherwise for their generous service to others. The award, which comes with a \$500 honorarium, honors a volunteer who has made an extraordinary contribution to our association, working behind the scenes during their retirement years.

This year's award was given at the recent Attleboro Conference to Vern and Sue Nichols.

In the statement that accompanied his presentation, Dick Gilbert cited the many ways that Vern and Sue have served as superb Area Caring Coordinators for the Metro New York/New Jersey cluster. "They are very attentive to the needs of fellow clergy and partners... with phone calls, e-mails and personal visits. They have facilitated the attendance of other NYC area UURMaPAns at the Attleboro Conference. While we were in New York City recently, they opted out of a social engagement with us so they could visit a colleague in a nursing home. They do all this quietly and graciously."

In addition to the personal contacts, they have organized many informal get-togethers, both in New York and New Jersey, such as museum visits, attendance at concerts, excursions, and 'game night' gatherings.

In retirement, Sue and Vern have been deeply involved with the UU United Nations Office, Sue serving as co-director from 1986-1993 and Vern as the President Emeritus of the UU NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security. He was the UN representative to the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and Nuclear Zero, was the Editorial Advisor to *Disarmament Times* and has published in *Dharma World*.

Sue was active in the International Association for Religious Freedom, also volunteering for New York

Public Radio and singing with the St. George's Choral Society.



Dick Gilbert making the presentation of the Unsung UURMaPAn Award to Vern and Sue Nichols

In their letter of thanks to the Board, they wrote "It has been a privilege for Sue to serve on the UURMaPA Board and for both of us to serve as Caring Network Coordinators for the NY Metro District since 2004." They went on to list several of their recent gatherings, and hoped that after their move to Portland, OR to be near family, their successor Caring Coordinator would have as much fun as they have had.

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Contact information for everyone above can be found in the on-line directory at www.uurmapa.org or in the printed directory.

You may view it online or download the Membership Directory (updated regularly) at 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:

With this issue, we see a return of the occasional column, “Elders in Action,” with an article by Curtis Bell about the current situation in Palestine. If you would like to participate in further discussion about this problem, a good place to do that would be the UURMaPA List-serv “SpeakUp.” Any UURMaPA member may join; see the instructions on our web site on the “Resources” page. To initiate a conversation once you have joined, send an e-mail message to speakup@lists.uua.org.

I would be delighted to run more essays in the “Elders in Action” column. What is your passion? If you’d like to share it with others, just send me a query and let’s spread the word.

Please remember that this is *your* newsletter, intended for your voices and your interests. I’m always looking for people to write the Partner’s Column and “What Brings You Joy?” Chances are good that you have something to say, and that your UURMaPA friends want to hear it.

The deadline for the Winter issue is January 15, for publication around February 1.

—Judy Welles

Please send your requests, comments and feedback to elderberries@uurmapa.org.

Change in Our Statement of Purpose

The UURMaPA Statement of Purpose comes at the beginning of our By Laws, found here: <http://uurmapa.org/documents/UURMAPABylaws.pdf>

As explained in the “News From Your Board,” page 10, we revisited this statement and reworked it to better reflect our current understanding of our purposes and our relationship with other Unitarian Universalist bodies. The new statement we are proposing is as follows:

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and in partnership with the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, the purposes of this organization shall be: to enhance the well-being of retired Unitarian Universalist ministers, their life partners and surviving life partners by providing such programs and activities as may benefit them; and to serve the Unitarian Universalist movement.

Any proposed change in the by laws (which this is) must be presented to our membership for review so that you can send comments and/or corrections to our Secretary, Judy Gibson (secretary@uurmapa.org), for Board consideration. The Board will take a final vote no sooner than 30 days after this publication of the change.

A Word from Your President

Giving Is Good for the Soul and for Charitable Organizations, Too

When I was in parish ministry, serving All Souls Kansas City UU Church, I remember a long-time member asking me, “It seems like every time I come to church, we are being asked to give money for some cause or another. Are you ever going to stop asking for money?” “No,” I said. “We will never stop asking you to align your life energy, your money, and your resources with your values. You are free to give when it seems right and not to give when it doesn’t, but we will never stop asking.” Living our values has a lot to do with our UU faith. We are about “deeds not creeds,” as the Universalists used to say. With that in mind, let me mention four ways you might consider giving.

Of course, twice a year the President of UURMaPA asks the membership to contribute to UURMaPA. We subsidize our annual UURMaPA luncheon at General Assembly. It is free for newly retired clergy and their life partners. We subsidize our conferences. We use our resources to pay for the travel expenses of our Board to meet face to face twice a year. If it were not for the generosity of our membership, we could not do the outreach or provide the services we do. Thanks for those who can and do choose to **give to UURMaPA**. UURMaPA contributions can be mailed to our Treasurer, Joel Weaver at 535 Gradyville Rd., Unit V-212, Newtown Square, PA 19073, or made through our web site.

But we are not alone in being worthy of our membership’s charitable consideration. In this issue of *Elderberries* you will see a pitch to support the **UUMA Endowment Fund**. The UUMA has been working very successfully to be a collaborative partner with UURMaPA. The UUMA has enlarged its staff and professionalized its organization. They are worthy of your generosity.

Because the annual number of ministers who are retiring has doubled from around 30 to around 65 for the last two years and probably will for the next several years, our retirement rate is affecting the UU Service Gratuity Society. These changes will mean cutting the amount that can be given to ministers, tightening the requirements for eligibility, and/or raising more money so there is more money to give. I have decided to change my will to include a legacy gift to the **Service Gratuity Society**. It is not a lot of money a minister receives, but it means a lot to those who have served to be remembered for the service they have given.

The fourth organization that supports ministers and their partners makes grants to those in serious financial need. This is the **UU Fund for Ministerial Relief**. They help with extraordinary medical expenses, or for winter heating and other forms of generosity for those of our ministers and their families who are in the greatest need.

For each of these UU related organizations, checks and gifts can be sent to that organization care of the UUA at 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston MA 02210.

This column is intended to encourage us all to give to these worthy organizations which do a wonderful job of serving our members. Thank you for your consideration and for the generosity of your gifts.

— W. Jim Eller, President of UURMaPA



Jim in Attleboro

Send updates! Address changes sent to the UUA or the UUMA do not reach us, so please send any changes in your address, phone or e-mail to: Marcia Olsen at membership@uurmapa.org or 285 NW 35th Street, Apt. 52, Corvallis, OR 97330. The most current Directory is online at www.UURMAPA.org (ID: UU-SAGE, password WISDOM). This Directory is updated monthly and is your best resource for current addresses for our members.

What Brings You Joy?

Rev. Robert F. Murphy

“The Mission Continues”

What gives me joy in my ministry?

I’m a minister. So I’ll tell you a story.

Here’s my family story. It’s a story about aging. My maternal grandfather was Albert Evans. He worked for the Converse Rubber Shoe Company, and he enjoyed helping people, but he was pushed into retirement at age sixty-five. My mother taught school in California. She was nudged into an early retirement at age sixty-two. Father and daughter had good pensions, but they weren’t able to age with knowledge and power. So they were unhappy in retirement.

Simon and Garfunkle sang, “How terribly strange to be seventy.”

The Beatles sang, “Will you still need me, will you still feed me...”



Bob Murphy

You may remember the rest of the song. In a blink, I became sixty-seven. After that, I voluntarily retired from my Massachusetts congregation. The congregation was active and growing, and it’s located in an attractive area, but after fifteen years of service for the same fellowship, my wife and I wanted to try something new. We’re grateful that we have the opportunity, because the opportunity to remain active and useful gives us much happiness. Given my family story, you can appreciate the situation.

Lyn and I will move to Florida at the start of October. Lyn will continue her medical work. On Sunday, October 4th, I’m scheduled to step into the pulpit as the new minister for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tarpon Springs. I’ll be providing part-time contract ministry for the oldest Unitarian Universalist church in Florida. Lyn and I are interested in church history, but much of our work will focus on religious needs in the here and now. Our goal is to bring all sorts of people together, regardless of age or ability. We want to be part of a multigenerational mosaic in organized religion. In practice, many of our activities will respond to the needs and interests of older Americans, but that’s not surprising for a retirement center in Florida. Key point: Lyn and I don’t want to be advocates for one age group. We want to be part of the picture for a new kind of multigenerational ministry. Maybe it will happen.

“Minister to Continue Mission in Florida,” was the headline in the local newspaper, after I announced my retirement. That gets it right.

When we were younger, my wife and I were impressed by Maggie Kuhn and her good work. Maggie was one of the founders of the Gray Panthers during the 1970s. If you don’t know her story, you may enjoy a bit of research. Maggie worked for one of the large denominations, but she was forced into retirement at age sixty-five. Back then, even liberal churches had some peculiar rules for employment. Instead of withdrawing into the shadows, Maggie Kuhn surprised many people by creating a multigenerational advocacy team. Maggie wasn’t just an advocate for the elderly. The motto for the Gray Panthers was “Age and Youth in Action.” The Gray Panthers were active with the environmental and anti-war movements and with Ralph Nader and his young attorneys.

The world’s population is growing and it’s aging. The economy is uncertain, the environment is changing, and Congress and the local government agencies are confused about a long list of topics. In this situation, the different age groups compete with each other for attention and resources. So it’s the right moment to talk about the different age groups and how they should relate to each other. No, I’m not asking for another academic round table or for the kind of “generation gap” declaration that was heard during the 1960s. The multigenerational discussion that’s needed for today’s world won’t develop in schools, or in workplaces, or in senior citizen centers. The multigenerational revolution won’t be televised by any of the major networks. It’s the churches, the synagogues, the mosques, and the other religious institutions that have the ability to bring the different age groups together. Imagine three, four, five, or even more generations helping each other despite traditional divisions and barriers. It may happen and the multigenerational revolution may do a lot of good. I’ll keep you posted on what’s happening in Florida. What’s happening in your region?

Partners' Column

The Turnaround Bob Baker

To begin, I wear full dentures and hearing aids, I have two replacement hips, and I will soon have cataract surgery — yet I am in very good health.

I enjoyed a turnaround from being a ministerial spouse when Charlotte Shivers, my wife, resigned her ministry at the Sepulveda Unitarian Universalist Society in Los Angeles, CA, and we moved to the Iowa farm home where she was born and raised — located outside Knoxville, Iowa, a small town about 35 miles SE of Des Moines. Charlotte went on to two years of interim ministry, first in Omaha, NE and then Kansas City. During those two years she lived in those cities while I stayed at the farm and visited on weekends. And I became very involved in the Des Moines UU church, which we had joined soon after moving to the farm.

I have been preparing meals and baking for UU's for 40 years, first at the Walnut Creek church in CA where Charlotte and I met and married, then at the Sepulveda Society where she served for ten years, and next in both Omaha and Kansas City. So I immediately began cooking at our Des Moines church. First I took over the Wednesday evening dinners, and very soon I began preparing and serving a Sunday brunch once a month. I also became chair of the Welcoming Committee and worked with other groups. All this made me very well known and popular in the church. In fact, I received the Unsung UU Award in 2001, and my name is on that plaque at church today.

When Charlotte ended her very successful interim work and returned to live in the farmhouse and participate in the Des Moines church, almost no one knew her and she became known as “Bob Baker’s wife.” That was a wonderful turnaround for both of us after years of me being “the minister’s husband” in our churches. Charlotte, of course, has become better known at our church over the years, but I still find it delicious to be on an equal footing with her.

Besides my church activities I keep busy at home. There are always jobs around a 100-year old farm house. Early on I worked with Charlotte to create a rental apartment upstairs and we've rehabilitated all the other rooms, too. I keep our large lawn mowed, keep weeds down in the windbreaks, plant and tend a large garden, and put up a freezer full of vegetable soups and applesauce each year.

I continue to love to travel, by car and train. In 1961-63 I lived in Germany with my first wife, teaching history and English at a US Army high school. We traveled all over Europe during those two years, and that whetted my appetite for foreign travel. During Charlotte's Sepulveda ministry, after I had retired as a San Francisco high school teacher, and partly to escape the role of minister's spouse, I traveled widely — to Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, and the Middle East.

Nowadays, I've calmed down and do my traveling mostly in the US. I'm a Civil War buff and have visited many battlefields and historic sites. I also love to spend time with our 6 children and 6 grandchildren, scattered over the US with one in Japan.

So all in all I'm in a very contented, relaxed retirement mode, looking forward to moving out of our wonderful, but isolated, farm home and into a smaller, more manageable residence, probably in Des Moines. We will continue to spend winters in Florida where Charlotte's older son and family live, or in California where other children and grandchildren are located.

At age 85 my life continues to be full and fulfilling.



Bob Baker

At its early October face-to-face meeting, your Board decided to continue mailing Elderberries to all of our member households for another four issues, pending a probable reader survey some time in 2016. In the meantime, we continue to make this proposal: If you would be willing to receive this newsletter on line, and no longer in the mail, please notify Marcia Olsen, our Membership Coordinator and Keeper of The Lists. You can reach her at membership@uurmapa.org.

An Elder in India

John Rex

This past June, I represented the UUA at programs organized by the Unitarian Union of North East India (UUNEI) and the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU), held in Shillong, India.



Entrance to the Theological Symposium

Other foreign participants in this great gathering were the Rev. Steve Dick, Great Britain, Executive Director of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU); two other Americans: the Rev. Jill McAllister, Senior Program Consultant for the ICUU; and the Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt, President of and representing Starr King School for the Ministry; and four representatives of the Hungarian Unitarian Church in Transylvania, Romania: the Rev. David Gyero, President of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists and Deputy Bishop of the Hungarian Church; the Rev. Csaba Todor; the Rev. Istvan Kovacs; and Emod Farkas, Lay President of the Hungarian Unitarian Church. Our gracious hosts were under the excellent leadership of the Rev. Derrick Pariat, President of UUNEI, and the Rev. Nangroi Suting, General Secretary of UUNEI.

Imagine such a gathering, involving the three largest groups of Unitarians in the world from three different continents — North America, Europe, and India — with three very different cultures and, in fact, three very different versions of faith, all coming together under the banner of Unitarianism!

Our first program together was a three day Leadership Training organized by the ICUU for Indian participants. Twenty years ago, I was on the staff of the first such Leadership Training, held in Sri Lanka for Asian Unitarians, so this was a welcome opportunity for me to be helpful and to speak on a favorite topic of mine, "Cultural Intelligence."

Then came a Theological Symposium at which I was the first of six speakers on the topic of "Theology or Culture: What Shapes Our Unitarian Faiths in the 21st Century?"

Finally, on June 15, came the Commemoration of the 150th birth anniversary of Hajom Kissor Singh, the founder of the Unitarian faith in this part of the world. Many hundreds of Khasis gathered along with many distinguished guests for a day of significant speeches and spectacular performances of indigenous dances, songs, and skits.



Khasi dancers celebrating the 150th Birth Anniversary of Hajom Kissor Singh

After the other foreigners departed the following day, I remained to share some special and very personal events with Khasi friends. Most special was the commemoration on June 17: a program at the AMB Secondary School in Kharang marking the twentieth death anniversary of my son, Christopher Andrew Rex. At the school there is a dormitory for girls (there called a "hostel") built in his memory in 1996. Chris struggled through seven years of mental illness before his death at the age of 25 in 1995. Following the service in his memory, the school held a program on mental illness, which I am told is a first in that part of the world.



John with residents of the hostel named after his son

It was my sixth visit to the Khasi Hills since 1993, including a ministry there in 1998-99. Such travel does not get easier as we age, but I am grateful to have had this opportunity to serve the UUA and to return to the loving hospitality of Khasi Unitarian friends.

Leadership Column

Greetings!

I'm delighted to have this opportunity to write you in my role as the UUMA Endowment Director. I took on this work of leading the UUMA's Sustaining the Call Campaign because I want to support UU ministers and UU ministry through nurturing a legacy of financial stability in service of collegiality, continuing education, and collaboration.



UUMA Endowment Director
Sarah Moldenhauer-Salazar

I know this is important to you as well. I was deeply moved by the decision of the UURMaPA Board to donate \$50 to the UUMA Endowment Fund when a UURMaPA member passes on. This generosity will have a significant impact over time and is a wonderful way to collectively honor those who have faithfully served our movement.

A strong endowment will help the UUMA strengthen our collaborations with partner groups and allies, and UURMaPA is at the top of the list! For example, UURMaPA has collaborated with the UUMA to help us better support partners during UUMA members' active ministries. We have partnered with you on Good Officer work and are working on a retirement workshop as well. With the proper funding, there is so much more we can do together!

The two primary goals of the campaign are to raise \$2 million dollars and to achieve 100% membership participation. However, two other sub-goals were clearly defined from the onset as well. The first of these goals is to establish ways to honor or memorialize ministers who have positively impacted our lives and our movement. We have created a Wall of Remembrance and Appreciation on the UUMA website. I hope you will consider giving gifts to the endowment fund to honor or memorialize ministers who have had a personal impact on your life. This is easily done at UUMA.org, under "Giving."

The second sub-goal is to help UUMA members learn about and make decisions concerning legacy gifts (i.e. philanthropy that is distributed at the end of life). To this

end, we have partnered with the UUA and can lend support to any of you who would like to establish a legacy gift to the UUMA Endowment Fund.

Thanks to significant legacy gifts from UUMA members, along with hundreds of pledges and gifts, we have raised over \$600,000 in the first year and a half of the campaign. Legacy giving will have the single largest impact on the campaign, and I would be grateful to have the opportunity to talk through with you these important end of life decisions. I welcome your calls and e-mails regarding any aspect of the campaign. Thank you for all the ways you tend to this ministry and movement we love!

Blessings, Sarah Moldenhauer-Salazar
510/529-1875, endowment@uuma.org

RETIREMENT "RITES" SOLICITED

Retirement is not an event, it is a process. A vital component of that process is the *liturgical rite* which formalizes the retirement of a minister from a congregation. UURMaPA has been working on both education for retirement and creating a *resource for planning retirement rituals* for clergy, congregations and denominational officials. We hope to generate materials that will be available on the UURMaPA website. Judy Welles and Dick Gilbert are coordinating this effort and invite your participation.

Specifically, we invite you to submit *samples of retirement rites* you have experienced or know about, in one of these categories: letters announcing your retirement; sermons after the letter has been received; social occasions for good-byes to minister and partner

(separately or together); how to say goodbye to the children of the congregation; and samples of the last service (sermon and other elements). Not all materials can be used, but we will carefully review and/or edit submissions. We also invite you to make *suggestions* that will enrich this project, and, if you know of helpful *resources*, please let us know.

Send your ideas and resources to Judy Welles at jcwelles@uuma.org.



Elders in Action

UUs and the Struggle for Palestinian Justice

Curtis Bell

We are hearing a lot these days about violence in Israel/Palestine. Jews killing Palestinians and Palestinians killing Jews — in Jerusalem, in the West Bank, in Gaza and in Israel itself. Fear and anger reign.

The story that we mostly hear is that this is an unprovoked surge of violence by Palestinians acting out of a simple hatred of Jews. But this is a misleading narrative, and all of us, as North Americans and as UUs, need to understand the true situation, because what happens in Israel/Palestine is critically important for many reasons, including peace in the region and the world. Moreover, as UUs we can help bring about a just solution, but we must first understand what is actually happening.

This past summer, in pursuit of such an understanding, Rosie McInnes, a UU from Newton, MA, and I led a group of 12 UUs in a Human Rights delegation to Israel/Palestine sponsored by Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East (www.uujme.org). A UU minister and two UU seminarians were members of the delegation.

the Palestinians, civil law and courts for Israelis in the neighboring settlements.



UU Minister Kate Lore at the Separation wall in Bilin in the West Bank

These stories provide only a glimpse of Israel's systematic denial of the human rights of Palestinians. More complete descriptions can be found in reports by the United Nations and reports by human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, B'tselem (Israeli) and al Haq (Palestinian). The decades-long denial of Palestinians' fundamental rights and the deep frustration that has resulted is the first thing to understand about the recent upsurge in violence.

The second thing to understand is that the situation is made explosive by the lack of any political process that could give Palestinians hope. For over 20 years the Oslo peace process has yielded a great deal of process but little peace, during which time Israel has expanded Jewish-only settlements, confiscated land, and solidified control over Palestinian life. This peace process seems now to have come to an end, leaving in place a dangerous and unsustainable system of discrimination and oppression affecting approximately half of the people between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean.

For some time now, Palestinians have had no faith in Israel's good intentions, no faith in the Palestinian Authority, and no faith in help coming from the US or European governments. Accordingly, in 2005 over 150 different Palestinian civil society organizations called for international economic pressure on the Israeli government to end the occupation, give equal rights to the Palestinian citizens of Israel, and to recognize the right of return for Palestinian refugees. They called for the non-violent methods of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS), the



UUJME delegation meeting with leaders of Susiya village in the West Bank

I can mention only a few highlights of our experience. We met with people from the village of Susiya in the South Hebron Hills of the West Bank who have been pushed onto a tiny part of their original lands by one maneuver after another of the Israeli government and subjected to constant attacks on their olive trees, their livestock and their water supply by nearby settlers. We spoke with Gerald Horton, a British-Australian lawyer in Ramallah who founded Military Court Watch and who documents the arrest and mistreatment of Palestinian children as young as 12 by the Israeli military, the usual offense being stone throwing. We learned of the two systems of law in the West bank, military regulations and courts for

continued next page

same methods used by the international community to end the apartheid policies of South Africa.

In 2009, leaders of Palestinian Christian churches seconded the call for BDS made by secular Palestinians in a statement known as “Kairos Palestine — a Moment of Truth.”

Religious denominations, pension funds, unions, university bodies and other organizations have responded to the call for BDS by challenging their own economic ties with corporations that profit from and sustain the occupation of Palestinian lands.

The religious denominations that have passed resolutions of shareholder activism and divestment from corporations that sustain the occupation include the Presbyterian Church USA, the United Church of Christ of the USA, the Friends Fiduciary Organization, 11 regional conferences of the United Methodist Church, and the Church of England. Other denominations, including the Episcopal Church of the USA, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Mennonite Church and the United Church of Canada have extensively debated the use of their economic power to help end the occupation.

But the UUA is missing from this long list of engaged religious organizations. This is in spite of our principles affirming the worth and dignity of every human being; calling for compassion, equity and justice in human relations; calling for democracy; and affirming the interdependent web of existence of which we are all a part. In addition, both in 1982 and 2002, the UUA General Assembly adopted social justice statements opposing the occupation and Jewish-only settlements. UUA action such as BDS in support of an oppressed people should follow from our principles and our statements of conscience.

Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East (UUJME) is therefore preparing a Business Resolution calling on the UUA to use the economic power of its investments to end the Israeli occupation by ensuring that none of its investments benefit corporations that share responsibility for and directly profit from the occupation. Our goal is to bring the resolution to a vote at the 2016 UUA General Assembly in Columbus, OH.

Getting such a resolution on the final agenda for GA and getting it passed by the delegates will require the strong support of UUs from all over the country. Together we can live up to our UU principles and help bring a just and lasting peace to both Palestinians and Israelis.

Curtis Bell is a member of the First Unitarian Church of Portland, OR, and serves on the Board of Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East. He welcomes comments and can be reached at curt@uujme.org.

This might also be a worthy topic for further discussion on UURMaPA's SpeakUp list-serv.

Nominating Committee Report

The following UURMaPA members have been nominated for the Board. The Nominating Committee seeks to keep a balance of ministers and partners on our Board. We also try to keep a balance of male and female members and to maintain geographic diversity.

All nominations are for two-year terms. The slate of nominees will also be posted on UURMaPA-Announce, our e-mail list for official business. If no other nominations are submitted by members to the Nominating Committee (Chris Backus at 360/715-1984 or chrisbackus@msn.com) for any position by April 1, the slate is considered elected and begins serving on July 1, 2016.

Secretary: Judy Gibson (incumbent)

Treasurer: Joel Weaver (incumbent)

Newsletter Editor: Judy Welles (incumbent)

Member-at-Large, conferences: John Manwell (filling out term)

On behalf of UURMaPA, we thank John Weston for his service since July 1, 2013 as Member-at-Large for Conferences. He has been working closely with John Manwell for a smooth transition.

We thank these continuing Board members for their hard work: Jim Eller, President; Marni Harmony, Vice-President; Liz McMaster, Caring Network Chair; Doug Gallagher, Good Offices and UUMA Liaison; and Judy Gillis, Caring Network Asst. Chair.

UURMaPA Nominating Committee

Chris Lilly Backus, Chair

Doris Hunter

Bob Morriss

A Usual Prayer

According to Thy will: That this day only
I may avoid the vile
and baritone away in a broader chorus
of to each other decent forbearance & even aid.

Merely sensational let's have today,
lacking mostly thinking, —
men's thinking being eighteen-tenths deluded.
Did I get this figure out of St. Isaac of Syria?

For fun: find me among my self-indulgent artbooks
a new drawing by Ingres!

For discipline, two self-denying minus-strokes
and my wonted isometrics, barbells, & antiphons.

Lord of happenings, & little things,
muster me westward fitter to my end —
which has got to be Your strange end for me —
and toughen me effective to the tribes en route.

~ John Berryman ~

News from Your Board

As the UURMaPA Board gathered in Attleboro before our annual fall conference, we realized how nurturing and beneficial face to face meetings can be. The ZOOM technology that lets us see and talk with each other across the miles in monthly meetings is wonderful, but there is no substitute for in-person team building.



Back row, L to R: John Weston (term expired 10/8/15), Judy Gibson, John Manwell (term began 10/8/15), Liz McMaster
Front row, L to R: Joel Weaver, Doug Gallagher, Judy Welles, Marni Harmony, Judy Gillis, Jim Eller

Our work together might be divided into four areas – re-examining our purpose, strengthening connections, financing our activities, and enhancing partner equality.

Re-examining our purpose — UURMaPA’s purpose was formalized in a set of bylaws sometime before 1995 when we incorporated, but in the last 10-15 years, we have evolved. The Board agreed that we should rearrange and add to the priorities in our statement of purpose to better reflect what we do. We work in close partnership with the UU Ministers Association in ongoing Good Offices work, and with Ministry Days programming at General Assembly, which both helps active ministers prepare for the transition to retirement and supports those who have formally retired from active ministries. In addition, we regularly work with UUA staff and General Assembly to celebrate retirements and honor the deaths of our ministers. Also, we realize that we are the primary UU group that is advocating for partners and surviving partners through retirement and later years. You are invited to send comments to the Secretary in the next month about our proposed revised purpose statement. See separate article, page 2.

Strengthening our connections — The Board worked on finding ways to strengthen the things we have always done — conferences for members, regional Caring Network, and quarterly *Elderberries* — and explored expanding new ways of connecting through online website information, publications and visual media about retirement issues, peer groups, e-mail announcements, SpeakUP, Facebook, and streaming conference programs for those who cannot attend. Some of our decisions included: we will keep mailing *Elderberries* to you for another year, as so many of us like having a paper copy (but don’t forget that a full color version is online on our website!); we are getting our website updated so that its

format is readable on smart phones and tablets; we are asking the UUA to collect a bit more information about minister’s partners when they file their Intent To Retire, and we are looking for ways to offer more support to members who find themselves as caregivers..

Financing our activities — UURMaPA has never had dues. Our financial support has always been member donations, and we ask for those twice a year. The initiatives the Board has chosen include several expenditures that we feel are worthwhile to support our members and expand our outreach; we hope that contributions will be adequate to support them. Our budget includes: paying to print and mail quarterly *Elderberries*; offering funds to Area Caring Coordinators to encourage and support gatherings in their regions; underwriting registration fees for conferences to keep them affordable, and offering subsidies to members with extra need; and underwriting the UURMaPA GA luncheon cost to keep it affordable. We consciously adopted a deficit budget this year, planning to meet this deficit from our savings.

Enhancing partner equality – There are nine members on the Board, and three of us are, or were, ministerial partners. The Board agreed that we want to build ways to make partners more equal as UURMaPA members, rather than just auxiliary. Ministers usually have lots of common experience — education, fellowship, congregational service, conferences, etc. Partners are widely diverse. But with retirement, all of us experience separation from the supportive religious community of our congregations, and we each chart new paths. One thing we partners suggested was that we choose conference themes that are of broad interest, not just theological. What else can we do in UURMaPA to be more inclusive? Let us know!

Judy Gibson, UURMaPA Secretary



New Members Since July 15, 2015

Judith Campbell and Chris Stokes
Kathleen Ellis and Jon Montgomery
Kelly Flood and Neil Chethik
James Ford and Janice Seymour-Ford
Michael Hennon
Anne and Lee Herndon
Jacqueline Luck (June, 2016)
William (Scotty) and Ellen McLennan
Diane Miller (July, 2016)
Patrick O’Neill and Patricia Williams
Susi Pangerl and Jack Gallagher
Craig and Barbara Roshaven
D. Michael Smith and Peggy Smith

NE Conference Breaks All Records

Seventy retired ministers and spouses squeeze into LaSalette Center in Attleboro, MA, Oct. 5-8, for the largest and longest UURMaPA conference ever. Our time was extended to four days this year, which gave more breathing room in the schedule and allowed time for a field trip via bus to the new UUA headquarters at 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston. We enjoyed a VIP welcome, delicious lunch, and talks by department heads.



Harlan Limpert, Chief Operating Officer, welcomes us in the lobby of 24 Farnsworth

Most of us had not been there, and it was good to experience the change together. Certainly communication between departments is much better, the UUA having gone from three buildings to one.

Back in Attleboro, Harvard's Dan McKanan encouraged us by talking of the UU scholarship in progress around the country. We shared concerns about aging and spirituality. Candace Ridington portrayed Emily Dickinson. And Andy and Chris Lilly Backus presented an outstanding *Odyssey*.

Daily worship was led by Kerry Mueller and David Hunter, Dorothy Emerson and Donna Clifford, Judy Welles (live streamed for the first time to some of our members!), and Dick and Joyce Gilbert, all with music by superb pianist Dawn Chung.



Andy Backus

We enjoyed good conversations over delicious meals. Although we have considered moving the conference elsewhere, LaSalette has consistently served us well, with reasonable cost and private bathrooms! So we plan to return next year. Be sure to save the dates: **October 3-6, 2016.**



Santa Barbara Reminder: Sold Out... BUT!

The Winter Conference in Santa Barbara has a full registration by now. However, we are starting a Waiting List for those inevitable cancellations. If you were late to register but want to attend, please fill out a registration form, found on our web site or on the last page of *Summer Elderberries* (<http://uurmapa.org/publications.html>) and send it with your check. We will hold your check for deposit only if space opens up, and will keep you posted. If you would be willing and able to come on short notice, you could note that on your form.

Ken Collier, Registrar, uurevken@gmail.com

Thank you, Eleanor Richardson!



Ginger Luke introduces our presenter, Dan McKanan



Ginger's partner and next year's co-chair, Don Chery



Judy Gillis and Liz McMaster, Caring Network Coordinators



Gordon Gibson, Connie and Art Severance



Betsy and John Fordon

Turning of Our Lives

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

— Proverbs 25: 25

George Briggs would like to thank colleagues for their expressions of sympathy and support following Elise's death last spring. He is doing well, and continues to appreciate his connection to the Winston-Salem congregation.

Jeremy Brigham reports that retired clergy and their spouses met for lunch at First Universalist in Minneapolis on July 22, 2015. "We had a very good sharing of our ministry stories over three hours. Several of us had chaplaincy as well as parish ministry careers. Minister's partners also had a chance to share their experiences."

Clockwise from left: Lucy Knights, John Cummins, Ward Knights, Charles Grady, Pat Jimenez, Roberta Haskins, Dennis Haskins, and Selma Brigham. Missing from the picture are Mary Samuels and Jeremy Brigham.





Victor Carpenter and Alan Deale on Star Island

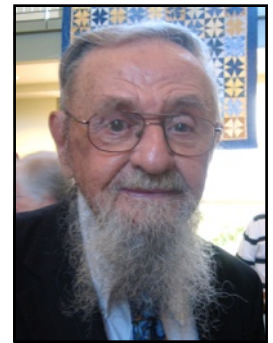
Victor and Cathe Carpenter came to Star Island in August to visit **Alan Deale** and **Kathleen Hunter** for the day. They have lots of history of being there together over the years; the Carpenters' daughter Gracia, who died a few years ago, is memorialized there.

Jan Knost just signed a contract for a second year as Interim at the UU Congregation of South County, RI until next June. He also has signed a publishing contract for his forthcoming book of selected writings titled *Word Cairns*, hopefully available by Christmas.

Doe Lockwood reports: On August 23, lightning struck the 2-story Holway family guest house, known as the "Big House" at Grand Lake-o-the-Cherokees in NE Oklahoma. The strike was so severe that there is nothing left to salvage — only a few ashes and the stone foundation and fireplace remain.

"The Holway family has provided 3 generations of SW Unitarian Universalist leadership, and they have generously shared their lake property with literally hundreds of UUs at retreats and board meetings and celebrations. It is a great loss to many of us, especially those from the SW who have spent time there."

The Maine Caring Network deeply mourns the loss of **Maurice Cobb**, 97, who worked tirelessly for years looking after others. His close-to-the earth self-sufficiency was an inspiration to us all. **Mary Adams** has found a wonderful new relationship with David Nichols, formerly active at the UU Church of Exeter, NH. **Rolfe Gerhardt** is able to fish again after successful back surgery last May. He and St. Lawrence 1965 classmate **Peter Richardson** led a joint 50th Anniversary worship service in Rockland in June. **Charles Stephen** is much better after a serious illness in the spring — he and Pat are back in Lincoln, NE. He has resigned as weekly reviewer from *All About Books* on Nebraska Public Radio, but will return as a guest next month. **Janet Hawkes** has had a challenging year with health issues and a car smashed up last summer.



Maurice Cobb

Vern and Sue Nichols returned in late July from their annual trip to the beautiful Pacific Northwest, their granddaughter's wedding in Sequim, WA (Vern officiating), and a delightful week on the Oregon Coast.



Gene Pickett and Kay Montgomery at Gene's last service, Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, Chatham, Massachusetts

Gene Pickett writes, "On September 18 I turned 90. On the 20th I preached my last sermon. I am uncertain which was more significant for me. The Meeting House had a reception following the service, some close colleagues and friends from Boston shared the occasion with me, and Peter Morales videoed some very thoughtful greetings. Bill Schulz and Beth sent flowers and kind words. It was a good day. Unhappily, Helen was unable to understand the occasion and enjoy it with me. Her dementia has worsened and caregiving has become more demanding. Fortunately, our daughter Ann is a visiting nurse and lives close by. And we live in a very supportive community."

Rachel Tedesco is "retired" but not relaxing much. She is serving as the Community Minister at the First Parish Church in Bridgewater, MA and is very involved with the Brockton Interfaith Community. She's also serving as the Worship Committee Chair. "I've a hard time saying 'No,'" she admits.

Ken Warren is 92 and is now living at Harbor Point at Centerville Nursing Home, 22 Richardson Rd., Centerville, MA 02632. His daughter, Mary Braque, can be reached at 508/846-0910. Cards and notes would be very much appreciated.

On October 13, 2015, **Dick Weston** had been a minister for 52 years. Add that to the 48 year ministry of his father, the Reverend Robert T. Weston, and you have a full hundred years of ministry. Dick plans to honor this auspicious century with a party at his home on Sunday afternoon, December 13, when he will also honor the memory of his beloved wife Mary, who died five years ago. You may contact him at uuwhale@gmail.com if you would like a personal invitation.

John Wolf was inducted into the Tulsa Historical Society and Museum's Hall of Fame on October 5. Among his many professional accomplishments, he was an inaugural member of the Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry, a group of clergy that represents all religions and ministries. "I'm the last one alive of that original gang," he said on receiving the award. "I feel like I'm accepting this award on behalf of all the clergy who helped pave the way for religious tolerance and understanding."

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 (and their helpers) for their careful and sensitive work writing the partners' and ministers' obituaries, respectively.

MADELYN C. H. BARBER (1921-2015)



The Rev. Madelyn Catherine (Harnish) Barber, 93, widow of the Rev. Charles Otis Barber, died Jan. 31, 2015 in North Attleboro, MA at the age of 94.

Born in Nova Scotia, Canada, on May 13, 1921, she was raised in Boston and educated in the public schools there, marrying Charles Barber in 1943. She earned her Bachelor's of Science in Education from the former State College of Boston and a Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Syracuse University, then taught social sciences, mathematics, English and general science for more than 20 years,

From 1962 to 1966, she was the executive director of the Doolittle Nursing Home in Foxboro, MA, where she earned an achievement certificate for management, advanced administration and medical economics from the AMA and the American Nursing Home Association.

She was involved in all phases of church life wherever her husband and she served. In the 1980s she was ordained to the UU ministry by the South Parish Unitarian Church of Charlestown, NH in recognition for her ministerial services to several small churches and acknowledgment of her contributions to religious and civic organizations during her long career.

After Charles died in 2006, she returned to North Attleboro, MA from FL, where they had retired, and lived in long-term care from 2009 until her death.

She is survived by her daughter, Susan E. Murphy, and her son, John R. Barber; nine grandchildren, many great-grandchildren and several great-great-grandchildren. A celebration of her life was held Feb. 7 at Madonna Manor, N. Attleboro, MA. Notes of remembrance may be sent to John Barber, 10 Cliff Dr., Plainville, MA, 02762.

CATHARINE CLEMENTS ROSS (1939-2015)

Catharine Clements Ross, 79, wife of the Rev. Robert Jordan Ross, died July 23, 2015 in Sugar Land, TX. A native of Wrens, GA, she met Robert at a dance during high school and married him shortly after her graduation, despite her earlier intention to avoid marriage.

Their first son was born in 1956 in New York City, where Bob was in seminary to become a Methodist minister. Catharine studied at Drew University and Brooklyn College, later at the University of Maine, Orange Coast College and Santa Ana College. After several years in Brooklyn, they served Methodist churches in Marietta and Smyrna, GA, shifting their ministry to UU churches in the tumult of the civil rights movement.

Eventually settling in Southern CA, Catherine's avocation became archeology and anthropology. She was an officer of the Pacific Coast Archeological Society, and she ran the archeological laboratory at Winchester, England during Bob's sabbatical, working on the old Roman walls of the city. In CA, she participated in many digs of pre-Columbian settlements. She also studied management with Bank of America and worked as a branch manager and a loan officer.

Catharine was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2008. Her decreasing capacities dogged her, but her love remained strong and clear; she painstakingly noted birthdays and anniversaries with greeting cards. A service was held July 25 at Providence Presbyterian Church in Sugar Land, TX.

In addition to her husband of 59 years, she is survived by her two sons, Jordan Clement Ross and Derek Allen Ross and their families, which include three grandchildren and three great-granddaughters.

Notes of remembrance may go to Robert Jordan Ross, 5910 Gentlewood Lane, Sugar Land, TX 77479.



ROBERT E. STEBBINS (1931-2014)

The Reverend Dr. Bob Stebbins, inspiring educator and avid traveler, died at the Hospice Compassionate Care Center in Richmond, KY, on 17 June 2014, aged 82.

Robert E. Stebbins was born in Lima, OH, on 28 July 1931 to Charles F. and Velma J. Stebbins. In 1953 he earned a B.A. in history from Bowling Green State University, OH. Receiving his M.Div. from Yale Divinity School, he was ordained and accepted into the Methodist ministry on 3 June 1956, and continued academic work at the University of Minnesota, earning a Ph.D. in modern European history in 1960.



In 1959 he withdrew from the Methodist ministry, seeking and receiving Universalist ministerial fellowship the same year. While studying for his Ph.D., he served as the executive director for Tri-U, a Unitarian Universalist student group at the University of Minnesota from 1959 to 1961. Dr. Stebbins taught European history at Eastern Kentucky State College from 1963 until his retirement in 2000.

Bob Stebbins was one of the founders of the Madison County UU Fellowship in 1978, and remained an active member of the congregation. He enjoyed traveling, and explored all seven continents. He was also an avid tennis player, playing until the age of 78. Friends and colleagues recall his “rational perspective” and sense of humor.

Bob’s family members fondly remember his “general delight in living,” and the love he had for his wife and three daughters. His wife, Ann, noted, “He encouraged me to reach a potential I did not know I had. He helped me lead a life I did not know I could.”

He is survived by his wife, K. Ann Stebbins; three daughters; a granddaughter and a grandson. A Celebration of Life was held on June 21, 2014 at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Madison County, in Richmond, Kentucky.

Notes of condolence may be sent to Ann Stebbins at 208 College View Dr., Richmond, Kentucky 40475.

Negative Space Ron Koertge

My dad taught me to pack: lay out everything. Put back half.
Roll things that roll. Wrinkle-prone things on top of cotton things.
Then pants, waist-to-hem. Nooks and crannies for socks.
Belts around the sides like snakes.
Plastic over that. Add shoes. Wear heavy stuff on the plane.
We started when I was little. I’d roll up socks.
Then he’d pretend to put me in the suitcase, and we’d laugh.
Some guys bond with their dads shooting hoops or talking about Chevrolets.
We did it over luggage.
By the time I was twelve, if he was busy, I’d pack for him.
Mom tried but didn’t have the knack.
He’d get somewhere, open his suitcase and text me —
“Perfect.”
That one word from him meant a lot.
The funeral was terrible—him laid out in that big carton and me crying and thinking, *Look at all that wasted space.*

**Unitarian Universalist Retired
Ministers & Partners Association
285 NW 35th Street, #52
Corvallis, OR 97330**

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