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ELDER · BERRIES

(A JOURNAL OF OVER-AGE MINISTERS, R.E. PEOPLE, WIVES, HUSBANDS, WIDOWS, WIDOWERS, ETC. - SEPTEMBER 1985)

George Marshall, Editor

Apology for a name: Some of the early Greeks stressed the reality of change, and Buddha taught there is no permanence, so the Editor takes solace in the assurance that the name on the masthead will not last. Our Committee felt that we should avoid both "minister" and "retired" since we wished to involve not only ministers but other superannuated religious leaders and their spouses. It was recalled that the late Max Kapp had edited a newsletter for the retired ministers called THE ELDER CHURCHMAN, but since we are now both men and women that would not do, and since we have been extending the concept of ministry to more than the ordained, another problem existed. It is our intention to form an organization for our retired religious leaders and their spouses. How to combine this inclusiveness into a title? We might have called it "Elder UU Leaders and their Surviving Spouses (Can't say wives for some are and will be husbands) "Spouses" is one of those unpleasant sounding Anglo-Saxon words; if the plural of mouse is mice, why can't we say "UU Elder Leaders and Surviving Spice"? Then there is the bird in the corner of the meeting who will protest that "leaders" or even "religious leaders" can include many non-professional lay persons, so Ye Editor has simplified all this and makes his frivolous solution of "Elder Berries": something you all can chew upon, since we will have a similar exercise over naming our incipient organization coming to birth at Maria Assumpta Academy in Petersham, MA on October 23-24, 1985.

("Surviving spouses/spice" suggest one has to first go into mourning to qualify, but how do we say, "spouses, widows or widowers?" in brief?) Please note my restraint about references to birthing at the Maria Assumpta. As for "retired" many of our colleagues say they are busier than ever now.

As in the popular song, "Please come to Petersham," and many are. The last count, according to Walter Kring, registrar, was an advance registration of 77, including much spice! It bodes well for our organization, and we look forward to a great time! --George M. ed.

WHEN THE SAINTS COME MARCHING IN

Together will be John Brigham, Bob & Mrs Doss, Phil & Yvonne Giles, Freda Carnes, Eva Bush, John & Edith Christensen, Arnold & Carolyn Westwood, Monica Sharp, Maurice Cobb, Bill & Lois Lewis, Mrs Ralph Barker, Mary Overley-Andrus, John & Dorothy Fisher, Peg Johnston, Walter & Sage Kring, Barbara Gudmundson, Roy & Lucille Congdon, Lillian Abbe, Jifka Fitzpatrick, Bill Gardner, Harold & Shirley Hadley, Al & Mable Harkins, Donald & Helena Lothrop, Joyce Huff, George Marshall, Marcella McGee, Harry & Kay Meserve, Al & Irene Perry, Beatrice Robbins, Keith & Peggy Munson, Ted & Alice Popp, Lester & Maria Mondale, Horace & Virginia Westwood, Ted Webb, Gerry & Alma Weary, Ralph Schmidt, Prescott & Dorothy Wintersteen, Leila Thompson, Mounir Saadah, John & Gladys Parkhurst, Bob & Mary Holmes, Jane Alen, William & Ethel Barnett, Susan Cooper, Howard Gilman, Ed & Annette Redman, Wally & Malama Robbins, and staff people: Bud Murdock, Dave Pohl, David Hubner, and our new Prexy--Bill Schulz. Charles Saleska will come if he can get a ride from Chicago --any offers? Carolyn Howlett's name was omitted in the typing.

It will be a great gathering of old and new associates gathering to renew friendships, find ties for continuing contacts, and to strengthen bonds of fellowship. Do YOU know everybody? Your editor does not, although he hopes he will by the end of the second day. How about you?

THANKS FOR THE MEMORY

Registrar Walter Kring has sent us the following summary of comments by those not able to attend the conference, but who wish us well, by and large. Walter sends along these comments, randomly recorded from responses: Eva Morin wrote, "I'm sure it will be two days of fun." John Burdette Charles wishes that he were up to travelling the distance from Fort Wayne to MA, adding, "It sounds like it will be a truly wonderful occasion. I hope a report

of what takes place will be sent to us who are not able to attend." Nelle Hauser writes her late husband, Argyle, would have enjoyed our Coming Out Party! A second angina attack put Bob Withington in the hospital, so he dares not plan to attend. Mrs John H. Deitrich says California is a long way off, and Harold Shelley is otherwise involved and "will wait for the Florida meeting." Al Zeigler quotes Ed Darling's immortal words, "Walk softly here, the ice is thin, the years are deep and you might fall in." Mason McGinness is probably the only one who can tell where or when Ed wrote that, but Mason will not be with us because he will be helping elementary school kids learn how to use the computer at the U of Chicago's Lab School. Mason, don't you think we need help too? Jack Hammon wrote he wishes to support fully our new organization but he and Oressa will be visiting daughter Dimity in British Columbia. Edwin Collier's late vacation will keep him away, and Carl Westman sends warm greetings and wants to be a part of the organization. Earl and Geraldine Engle write the distance from the Midwest is too great to attend. Andrew Rosenberg is running an orchard and this is the harvest season. Bob Storer wrote that he has spent the past four years out of the country to help maintain a low profile for the new minister in Winchester, but he added, "My one desire is still to be needed. That is our greatest need: to be needed," and we can all relate to that. Wally Argow will be back in Toledo as the principle speaker at the 125 Anniversary of the church he served so well. Francis P. Randall wrote a long letter, noting, "I think such get-togethers of the U.U. Vets is great." Don Harrington writes that his new wife Anna's three daughters, ages 15, 17 and 19 have just arrived in the USA from Romania, and they will need his presence as they begin school in America. George Whitney sends greetings to all, glad we are "getting the show on the road." Betty Cyrus's long and serious letter will be read at the meetings; she is concerned about the unchurched status of many minister's spouses: "(often) the only person connected with a church who does not have a minister is the minister's spouse." Mrs. Elizabeth (Vincent) Silliman wishes the new organization good luck, and finally Mrs. Mary

Curtis writes that she is working fulltime, but she sent a little book, MIDNIGHT NOTEBOOKS, which was a journal kept by her husband, James H. Curtis, during the three years before he died at age 42. She hopes we may read some parts of it at the conference.

All in all, it is clear that we are beginning with a legacy of goodwill from our contemporaries, and further, it is clear there is much sentiment for such an organization, and it is time. On to Petersham!

GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE

In the Summer "UU RETIRED MINISTERS NEWSLETTER," Arnold Westwood, acting editor, told how a small group of us meeting in Senexit decided we needed an organization, and we set up ourselves as a committee. The Steering Committee met in Amherst, MA in mid-August with President Hadley calling the meeting to order with members summarizing what they have done to launch the new organization at the Petersham meeting, October 23-24. Assignments were made for activities at and in preparation for the meeting, while Bill Gardner reported for the pending draft of By-Laws. Several suggestions were given to make them both simpler and clear, and they were referred back to the Committee. The question of name for the organization must be decided at Petersham when we adopt the By-Laws and this was seen as the most difficult and time-consuming issue. A budget was discussed, and this must wait decisions that will influence its scope and possible source of funds.

It was a consensus that this group should form for non-political purposes, with no hidden or overt agenda for pressuring the movement, and that it should apply to the UUA Trustees for membership as an affiliated member. There is much feeling that retired ministers are a source of denominational wisdom that is not utilized by our successors, but that is the denomination's loss, not a matter we should try to force. Also, there may be some members with grievances, and in comradely fashion we who can should try to be

helpful without become a pressure group. Also some of our members may have social or denominational resolutions they would like to see acted upon, but it was our sentiment that we had our day in the sun and should not intrude in the political arena. In other words, we hope to be a supportive group of the UUA and a social group for our own members.

PROPOSED OFFICERS

Once the By-Laws are adopted, officers must be elected. We propose the following slate :

President: Harold Hadley

Vice President: Arnold F. Westwood

Secretary: Walter D. Kring

Treasurer: William E. Gardner

Editor: George Marshall

Program Chair: Horace Westwood

According to the proposed By-Laws the officers would rotate around the continent (as they do in the UUMA) so that members in various areas would all have an opportunity to make input as officers.

The weakness of this slate is the lack of women, spouses, and survivors in the offices in question this year. Perhaps we need a larger council to involve more people, but would it be just something to make meaningless busy-work?

NOT A TRIVIAL PURSUIT

Ted Webb will be with us, and he is trying to find out what is the authority for the claim that William Lloyd Garrison was a Universalist. Anybody know? Was he one, or was his family one? Ted would like to trace this claim, true or false. Reinfeld's "The Great Dissenters" refers to Garrison as a Baptist, but the Universalist claim is not new.

KUDOS

Speaking of Ted Webb, he comes from Sacramento, CA (or does he?) raising the question, who has come the greatest distance? the shortest distance? who is the oldest? the youngest? the handsomest? the brainiest? The Etcetera?

THE PROGRAM

The Business Meeting, 11:00 a.m.:

1. Opening remarks and greetings -President Hadley
2. Steering Committee Report
3. Resolution on Purpose and Organization
4. Adoption of Organization Name
5. Proposed By-Laws
6. Report of Nominating Committee
7. Election of Executive Board and Nominating Committee
8. Discussion of Newsletter guidelines and proposed name
9. Report on request to UUA grants making panel for funding
10. Other Business - workshop recommendations, etc. post-Petersham publicity, etc.
11. Adjournment of Business Meeting --NOW THE FUN BEGINS!

Workshops -- Wednesday afternoon:

1. Name & By-laws -Bill Gardner, Harold Hadley
2. Surviving as A Spouse - Freda Carnes, Monica Sharp
3. Creating Support Systems - Horace Westwood, Bob Doss
4. Financial Survival - Dave Hubner, Ray Nasemann
5. A UU Retired Talent Bank - Walter Kring, Dave Pohl
6. Newsletter Guidelines - George Marshall, Bud Murdock
7. Spreading the Story - surprise!

Free time --ample; and Social Hours!

Worship together - Unitarian Church, Harry Meserve

Evening Entertainment and Conversation with President Bill Schulz

THURSDAY'S PROGRAM:

Morning walk before breakfast

Continuation of business session and new concerns emerging from Wednesday's activities; more workshops? It's all up to you.

12:30 p.m. Closing Meal (Luncheon), followed by Closing Assembly and Friendship Circle

NOT FOR BUSINESS ALONE

Let's not get bogged down in too much, or heated, parliamentary procedures and our favorite UU activity of splitting hairs. We want to come together in friendship and to recall the days of former glory when we were the kings and lords of creation, or at least the Lord's Vicar of such.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

As you may have seen in the June UU WORLD Ye Editor (why Ye I donot know, except it seems to sound good) agreed with the Davies Memorial Committee to try his hand at researching and writing a biography on A. Powell Davies, a noted Unitarian minister and public figure during the earlier years of most of our ministries. Recollections, involvements, friends, memories, shared incidents and scuttlebutt about Davies will be appreciated. The generation that knew and worked with Powell is thin, and your help will be appreciated. We have heard much about our giants of the nineteenth century, but we should remember some of the 20th Century. His personal ministry, public controversies, association with colleagues as well as parishioners, his denominational service, such as on Committees A and B, and the explosive atmosphere of Washington are all part of the area for this study. Frankly I donot know that I am up to the task, but I hope to give it a good shot in the next year or two. I am going to California to discuss the project with his widow, Muriel, before we meet in Petersham, and hope to explore his papers in the Meadville/Lombard archives in the deeper fall. In the meantime your help will be appreciated. Thank you,—George M.

This Newsletter was edited by George Marshall,
P. O. Box 322, West Hyannisport, MA 02672 who
alone is responsible for its contents, alas!

THANK YOU, RON CLARK

We would be a sad group if we could not take time to say, "Thank you, Ron Clark, for your inspiration in launching this organization, and for the concern and thoughtfulness you have shown for many retired or retiring ministers, widows and spouses, who needed guidance through the new, strange, often frightening world of retirement financing without local salary, guided by you. We wish you well in the next phase of your ministerial career."

He convened the gathering at Senexet on Ministerial Finance out of which this call to meeting has come.

OUR APPRECIATION

We are indebted to those who have made this conference possible: members of the First Congregational Parish, Unitarian, Petersham, the Sisters of the Maria Assumpta Academy, and the UU Council on Church Staff Finances.

GRATITUDE

Often I have felt that I must praise my world
For what my eyes have seen these many years,
And what my heart has loved.

And often I have tried to start my lines:

"Dear Earth," I say,

And then I pause

To look once more.

Soon I am bemused

And far away in wonder.

So I never get beyond "Dear Earth."

- Max A. Kapp, late Editor,

THE ELDER CHURCHMAN

(from To Meet the Asking Years)

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