

# UU ELDER BERRIES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE U.U. RETIRED MINISTERS ASSOCIATION

Vol IV #1

Albert Q. Perry, Editor

P.O. Box 66

Summer 1988

Eastport, Maine 04631

## NOTES ON UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

EXECUTIVE BOARD  
1987-1989

### PRESIDENT

Rev. J. Harold Hadley  
35 Pomeroy Court  
Amherst, Mass. 01002  
(413) 253-3143

### VICE PRESIDENT

Rev. Robert H. Holmes  
P.O. Box 83  
Harrison, Me. 04040  
(207) 583-6102

### SECRETARY

Rev. Walter D. Kring  
P.O. Box 216  
Brookfield, Mass. 01506  
(508) 867-3986

### TREASURER

Rev. William E. Gardner  
77 Sailfish Drive  
East Falmouth, Mass. 02536  
(508) 540-3862

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Rev. Albert Q. Perry  
P.O. Box 66  
Eastport, Me. 04631  
(207) 853-2326

### BOARD MEMBERS

Carolyn C. Howlett  
R.R. 1, Box 13  
Center Lovell, Me. 04016  
(207) 925-6694

Margaret H. Johnston

"The Hills"  
West Newbury, Vt. 05085  
(802) 429-2412

Rev. Philip R. Giles  
27 Herring Run Road  
North Harwick, Mass. 0264  
(508) 432-3068

June 17-21, 1988

"Surrounded by colorful UU banners and inspired by the (theme) anthem 'Touch the Earth and Reach the Sky,' nearly 600 delegates convened to open the first Plenary Session of the 27th General Assembly here in Palm Springs," so read the first sentence in the lead article of the Assembly newsletter "Desert Signal."

A goodly number of retired ministers and spouses were present for that inspiring opening session on Friday, June 17th, 1988, and still others were to come later. The exact numbers of UURMA members present at G.A. await the computer over-all attendance analysis to be available later this summer. A complete attendance accounting will appear in the Fall issue of *ElderBerries*.

The five-day Assembly, the first ever held over a weekend, with its plethora of opportunities for learning about and involvement in UU'ism was literally overwhelming for almost any individual, and especially for the new or first-time delegate. A brief summary of the activities would include: 9 morning worship services, 5 plenary business sessions, 108 workshops on the general theme "The Growth and Development of the Congregation" as organized by the G.A. Planning Committee, plus 112 additional workshops, each sponsored by some committee or organization on a special topic of UU interest.

All this in addition to alumni reunions, award ceremonies, musical programs, annual banquets, and a variety of celebrations all bidding for delegate attention. If there was, by chance, still any time to spare, the large convention hall was crowded with scores of attractive display, exhibit, and sales tables to satisfy the tired delegate wishing something still more to take back home.

Following are some programs and workshops of our own, as well as others which reflect the more specific interests and concerns of our UURMA members attending:

#### 1. Professional Day

##### a. Workshop: "Retirement: Existential and Faith Dimensions"

Sponsors: Council on Church Staff Finances and UU Retired Ministers Association

##### b. Breakfast Meeting: Ministers' Partners

#### 2. Sunday Morning: Service of the Living Tradition--honoring the Ministry of the Association by remembering the deceased, recognizing the Retiring, and welcoming the New into Fellowship.

#### 3. General Assembly Workshops

##### a. "Dynamics of a Fulfilling Retirement"\*\*\*

Sponsor: UURMA

##### b. "Elderly Housing/Long-Term-Care Facilities"--Panel

Sponsor: Social Justice Department, UUA

*Continued*

- c. "Our UU Elders: An Underutilized Congregational Resource"  
Sponsor: UUA Planning Committee
- d. "The Right to Die"  
Sponsor: Social Justice Department, UUA
- e. "A Healthy Ministerial Family" (cradle to grave)  
Sponsor: UU Ministers' Partners--David Pohl, Leader
- f. "Clinton Lee Scott as We Knew Him"--A Memorial Panel  
Sponsor: Church of the Larger Fellowship
- g. "Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography"--Dan Wakefield, Leader  
Sponsor: GA Planning Committee

\*Sylvio Nardoni conducted his final Professional Day workshop for the counsel and UURMA before concluding his work as Executive Director of the CCGF and returning to law practice in Los Angeles, California, this summer.

\*\*Harry Scholefield who was originally scheduled to speak on this topic could not be present due to emergency open heart surgery. John Clark and Howard Matson kindly agreed to pinch-hit and did so most acceptably. A colorful get well card was signed by those present and sent to Harry.

Following are the names of the "Ministers Completing Full-Time Ministries" (retiring) as printed in the G.A. Sunday Morning "Service of the Living Tradition" Order of Service:

Eugene H. Adams	Donald J. Jacobsen
John Alexie Crane	Donald W. Male
Marvin D. Evans	Mary L. Nelson
Ann B. Fields	Donald W. Rowley
Max D. Gabler	Addison E. Steves
Elium E. Gault	Kenneth J. Smith
Clifton B. Gordon	Todd J. Taylor
Alfred J. N. Henrikson	Herbert G. Weeks
Daniel G. Higgins, Jr.	Carl H. Whittier

A list of "Ministers Deceased" was also printed in the above-mentioned Order of Service as follows:

Seth B. Brooks	Christopher Moore
Paul B. Henniges	Philip M. Petursson
David B. Loomis	Conrad Rheiner
Warren B. Lovejoy	Clifford H. Vessey
Robert F. Marshall	Robert T. Weston
	Billie Rose Wright

A "Litany of Remembrance" printed in the Order of Service was led by Rev. Carl H. Whittier, one of the Ministers Completing Full-Time Ministries. Following are the first and last verses of that eight-verse Litany adapted from the writings of Ralph Helverson.

Minister:

We are gathered in remembrance of all ministers who sought the light of understanding, who extended the fellowship of freedom, and whose words and deeds remain as a memorial.

Congregation:

We lift up thankful hearts for the ministers who have set before us examples to follow. May our work and the purpose of our calling show forth in the living and those yet to come, the ministry they proclaimed.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association began its Ministers Day Celebration and Business sessions, on the customary Professional Day just prior to G.A., with a worship service at which the 25- and 50-year ministers were given special recognition.

The names of those Ministers Fellowshiped/Ordained 50 years ago (1938-1988), all of whom are members of the UURMA, were listed in the Order of Service as follows:

John Winthrop Brigham  
Edward Allison Cahill  
Brainard Frederick Gibbons  
Arthur Root Graham  
Donald Szanthy Harrington\*\*  
Kenneth Clark Hawkes  
John Wallace Laws

Felix Danford Lion  
Andrew X. Mahy  
George W. Marshfield\*  
Harry C. Meserve  
William Joseph Robbins  
Peter Henry Samsom  
William Whittemore Lewis

\*Ordained in 1937.

\*\*Spoke at the service representing the group.

## 4TH ANNUAL NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE

The UURMA is holding its fourth New England Conference this year at the Champion Renewal Center, 319 Concord Road, Weston, Massachusetts. The dates are October 11-13, which is the height of the foliage season in that part of the country. The conference will begin at 4:00 P.M. on Tuesday and end at approximately 2:00 P.M. on Thursday.

Among those who will participate in the scheduled program are Horace Westwood, Harry Hoehler, Jack Fisher, a representative of the Champion Center, a representative of the U.U.A., and three surviving spouses of UU ministers. Harold Hadley will conduct the UURMA business meeting on Thursday morning.

The accommodations at the Champion Center are ample for our needs. There is an elevator for those who do not wish to use the stairs. The dining hall in the basement serves buffet-style. Special diets can be accommodated if known in advance. The registration is being handled by Mrs. John O. Fisher, Registrar, P.O. Box 791, Groton, MA 01450. Reservations, accompanied by a check made out to the Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers Association for \$52.50 per person, should be received by August 30th. Unfortunately, it will be too late by the time that this arrives. However, a mailing was sent to all and we trust that everyone had the notice in time.

The Renewal Center will keep rooms available for the exact number that we request, but will charge us for them whether used or not. The Center requires reservations six weeks prior to the Conference. There are plenty of rooms, both single and double, so any UURMA member can be accommodated regardless of location of residence. There will be time in the schedule of events for foliage viewing.

### SCHEDULE

#### TUESDAY, October 11

4:00 to 5:00 P.M. Arrival. Room Assignments.

5:00 to 6:00 P.M. Social Hour. Wine and Cheese

6:00 P.M. Dinner

8:00 P.M. Welcome and Announcements.

Program: Each member will have three minutes to tell the group his or her most satisfying experiences in the ministry, and one most embarrassing experience.

Sing-Along climaxes the evening.

(continued)

**WEDNESDAY, October 12**

- 8:00 A.M. Breakfast
- 9:00 A.M. "Advocacy Needs for Spouses" by three spouses.
- 10:30 A.M. Coffee Break
- 10:45 A.M. Workshop: "Survival Techniques in Retirement"  
Roundtable Discussion led by Jack Fisher
- 12:30 P.M. Lunch

Free time until 4:00 P.M.

- 4:00 P.M. Harry Hoehler gives the Weston Story
- 4:30 P.M. The story of Champion Renewal Center by a staff member
- 5:00 P.M. Social Hour--with wine and cheese
- 6:00 P.M. Dinner
- 8:00 P.M. Worship Service in Weston UU Church Chapel.  
Tentative speaker: Horace Westwood

**THURSDAY, October 13**

- 8:00 A.M. Breakfast
- 9:00 A.M. Development at the Department of the Ministry with
- 10:15 A.M. Coffee Break
- 10:45 A.M. UURMA Business Meeting and Information.  
Evaluation
- 12:30 P.M. Lunch
- 2:00 P.M. Departure

The Champion Renewal Center, 319 Concord Road, Weston, Massachusetts 02193, is reached by U.S. Route 20; turn north at traffic lights in Weston to Weston Center. Left at Weston Center to Concord Road, which is first right. Left at fork in road. Champion is 1.5 miles from Weston Center.

## **UURMA SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE UPDATE**

The questionnaire mailed on June 2, 1988, to all UU Retired Ministers was a project undertaken by the Executive Board of the UURMA. As the extended time set for returning the completed forms nears (August 1, 1988), the Board wishes to take this opportunity to thank all who have responded so promptly and with thoughtful consideration.

During the month of August the Kennan Research and Counseling firm will analyze the returns so that a full report will be available for inclusion in the Fall Issue of *ElderBerries*. As of this writing, one week before the deadline date, suffice it to say that, as of now, of the 242 questionnaires mailed out 132 completed forms have been returned. That is wonderful! We are told that a 54 percent return is quite amazing for this kind of a questionnaire. Again, many thanks!

## **NOMINATIONS**

In that nationwide conferences of the membership of the UURMA are all but impossible, our Bylaws established a particular procedure for biennial elections with the maximum involvement possible by any and all who are interested.

We have a Nominating Committee composed of Robert T. Dick, Joyce Huff, and John Brigham. The Bylaws also provide for soliciting nominations from the membership, and this is the point of this notice. Actually, the Bylaws call for a notice to be sent out in February, and for interested members to respond before May, but this did not work in 1987. We have little control over the printer, and often we have had to wait upon the schedule of the Department of the Ministry before getting our issues mailed. Therefore, the committee is advancing its schedule.

Harold Hadley, our President, has asked to step aside, and by his request a new one must be found. All other officers, Board Members, and the Editor may be reelected or replaced. The President must be or must have been an ordained UU Minister serving or having served a recognized pastorate. This is a requirement of the UUMA with which our organization is now an affiliate. Other positions may be filled by a Surviving Spouse.

Send nominations to Rev. Robert T. Dick, 1 Walnut Way, Springfield, VT 05156-9142.

Suggestions for	Incumbent
PRESIDENT	.....Harold Hadley
VICE PRESIDENT	.....Robert Holmes
SECRETARY	.....Walter Kring
TREASURER	.....William Gardner
EDITOR	.....Albert Perry
BOARD MEMBERS	.....Carolyn Howlett
	.....Margaret Johnston
	.....Philip Giles

One may suggest persons from any state or nation, but, as a practical matter, we probably need officers who can get together at some central location with a minimum of expense.

The nominees will be submitted to the present Board, which will elect the new Executive Board at its May meeting.

## NEWS AND NOTES

Word has been received from Edy Vessey, Cliff Vessey's wife, as follows:

"One year ago Cliff had a brain abscess and was operated on, followed by 2 months of hospitalization and rehabilitation. He has his ups and downs and is handicapped both mentally and physically now, but remembers everything.

"I care for him as best I can. We both will be 78 this year.

"How I wish Cliff could have more visitors. Please tell everyone whoever comes to Maui to phone or come to see him. We have only a one-bedroom condo here in Wailea, so couldn't have overnight guests, but Cliff would love to see or hear from anyone."

Address: Rev. Clifford H. and Edy Vessey, 10 Wailea Ekolu Place #903, Kihed, Maui, HI 96753.  
Telephone: (808) 879-9318.

\*\*\*\*\*

One of our very notable members--both a retired UU minister and a Surviving Spouse--Dottie Spoerl, serves as an Editorial Advisor for *ElderBerries*, although making no secret of her disapproval of the name. Recently, she wrote: "Just to prove that my intuitive dislike of the name 'ElderBerries,' and my feeling that it  
(Continued)

was a bad one for UU Retired Ministers, I send you a paragraph from Robert Grave's "The White Goddess."

According to this study of folklore and primitive religion, Judas hanged himself on an Elder tree and the cross was made of Elder wood; witches rode on Elder sticks; burning an Elder log brings the devil into the house; but especially, a cradle made of Elder wood can cause a baby to sicken and die.

However, I associate elderberries with the bushels of them we used to gather along the river in Essex, Massachusetts, where I had my first settled parish. We were paid \$18 a week, and that had to support the family as well as pay college expenses. Irene made quantities of jelly from the berries, and three or four nights a week we supped on hot biscuits and elderberry jelly. It wasn't very good. It was a little bit bitter, but it served its purpose, and so far our newsletter serves us, however imperfectly.

\*\*\*\*\*

Rose Hinckley writes that Mrs. Harriet Wyman, of Lansing, Michigan, recently came back to Maine on a visit. She spent time with her sister in Newport and visited Rev. Kenneth Hawkes in Portland. She also went to Augusta to see the Hinckleys and Beatrice Robbins. We are assured that she is still very interested in the UU ministry and likes to hear from old friends. Her address is 930 No. Capital Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906.

\*\*\*\*\*

Bill and Priscilla Gardner attended an ElderHostel in Halifax, Nova Scotia, this summer, and they were able to get back into the U.S. via a ferry that connects New Brunswick and Eastport, Maine, where your Editor is living in the old Unitarian Parsonage. It was certainly good to see them. The Perrys also had a chance to visit with Don and Rose Hinckley, Don Lothrop, and Hank and Loraine Colpitts--all loyal members of the UURMA--when these notable members of our movement came "Down East" to preach at the Unitarian Meeting-House.

\*\*\*\*\*

## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST RETIRED MINISTERS ASSOCIATION

Financial Statement for Twelve-Month Period ended June 30, 1988

### INCOME

UUA Department of Ministry	1,000.00
UUMA--Chapter Grant	200.00
Contributions from Members	3,312.00
Interest Income	<u>235.76</u>
Total Income	<u>4,747.76</u>

### EXPENDITURES

Executive Board	1,264.65
Newsletter <i>ElderBerries</i>	1,074.13
Telephone, Postage, and Supplies	880.37
Conferences	1,692.78
Contact Counseling Program	257.69

Service Gratuity Endowment Campaign	77.65
Miscellaneous	<u>113.00</u>
Total Expenditures	5,360.27
NET INCOME (EXPENSE) for Period	<u>(612.51)</u>
	<u>4,747.76</u>

Summary:

Balance, July 1, 1987	4,262.99
Less: Net Expense for Period	<u>612.51</u>
Balance, June 30, 1988	3,650.48

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Year	Number of Contributions	Amount Contributed	Cumulative
1985-1986	55	\$ 1,476.70	
1986-1987	83	2,343.25	\$ 3,819.95
1987-1988	114	3,312.00	7,131.95
	<u>252</u>		

In the three-year period just ended we received a total of 252 contributions from 155 members, 97 of whom were ministers (including spouses) and 58 were surviving spouses of deceased ministers. You will note that the total number of contributions increased substantially this third year.

Contributions range from \$5 to over \$100 with the average over the three-year period being \$28.30. We hope we may continue to increase the number of contributing members until all are participating. The grants from other groups have helped get us started but from now on we are going to need the complete support of our membership to keep going and to carry out the projects that have been started or proposed.

Each fall we send out an appeal to all members for their financial support. As you read this you may wish to send in your contribution for 1988-1989 in advance of the appeal letter. You may be sure it will be greatly appreciated. Send it to the Treasurer, Rev. William E. Gardner, 77 Sailfish Drive, East Falmouth, MA 02536.

On behalf of your Executive Board please accept my thanks for your support.

William E. Gardner, Treasurer

\*\*\*\*\*

I receive a lot of delightful material from George Whitney, who does a monthly "NOTES from a DESERT JOURNAL," which he seems to run off on a word processor. He lives in Las Cruces, New Mexico. . . Sometime I shall edit one of his articles for our newsletter, but until then, let me quote a poem or two.

### *INDECISION*

Two worlds I know,  
One is summer--One is snow.  
One is a cloud on a mountain peak,  
One is the mountain stony and bleak.  
From cloud to stone  
My two worlds swing--Which one I'll choose I do not know.

### *"THE HOLINESS OF HANDS"*

Look not upon my dirt stained fingers  
With disdain for these are holy hands  
That touched Earth's sacred, lovely soil  
And tamped it firm around the budding plant  
And all this Spring and lovely green  
And buds and birds and beauty  
Hold we in life's creative toil  
And I am part of it, my soul washed clean.