

U U ELDER BERRIES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE U.U. RETIRED MINISTERS ASSOCIATION

Volume III #3
Albert Q. Perry, Editor

16 Shackford St.

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U.U.R.M.A. FLORIDA CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 1-3, 1988

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Graced by fine weather, twenty-eight participants (retired ministers, spouses and surviving spouses) shared renewed friendships, fine memories and new experiences as they gathered at the "U-U PINES" (formerly Unity-In-the-Pines), at Brooksville, Florida for the second annual Florida Conference of the U.U.R.M.A. The location is now the property of the Florida District of the U.U.A.

The program, arranged and directed by Carl Westman, was greatly appreciated by all who attended. Leading off was David Pohl, Director of the Dept. of the Ministry, who shared important information about the staff, tasks and functions of his department of the U.U.A. He reviewed some of the prospects and problems of our present ministry.

Don Lawson reviewed his experience as a "Senator" in the "Florida Silver-Haired Legislature". He described his election, the sessions at the State Capital at Tallahassee and the nature of the resolutions considered and their political impact.

Paul Husted stimulated a great deal of discussion with his talk and film presentation on "Global Abundance and Economic Alternatives". He also shared with the gathering the videotape, "The Shadow Government" produced by the Christic Institute, and it proved provocative, informative and alarming.

Mr. Jerry Bassett, an insurance specialist, reviewed for the group some of the pitfalls, difficulties and ambiguities when involved with medical insurance. His candor and competence were much appreciated.

Also attending, as he did last year, and taking part in the program was J. Harold Hadley, President of the U.U.R.M.A., who reported on the program, plans, prospects and problems of our association.

At the conclusion of the conference, the group voted enthusiastically to meet again at the "U-U PINES"; and the dates of February 6, 7, and 8, 1989, were reserved with the management. John Morgan was appointed as Chair of the 1989 meeting.

RETIRED MINISTER - ACTIVE POET

In this issue we would honor one of our notable retired ministers, Sheldon Christian, who might be said to have had a more active and significant role in retirement than when he was a full-time minister. Exactly when he retired your Editor cannot remember, but during this time he has stepped into several distressed or threatened UU churches as an Interim leader and saved the situation.

Sheldon so served the Pittsfield, Maine Universalist Church which was torn apart during the Consolidation controversy when a majority of the congregation marched out one Sunday morning and started a new church of a more traditional sort. For a couple of years, Sheldon served the remaining remnant, and the church survived and began to grow and, eventually, made up most of its losses.

Also, during his retirement, Sheldon Christian has been active as a member in the Brunswick, Maine U.U. Church, and at present is serving it as clerk as well as attending regularly. However, he is probably best known as a poet, and we have prevailed upon him to let us publish some of his more recent works in this issue as a possible source of encouragement to other retired men and women to continue to use their talents. In any case, we are assured that most will enjoy these samples of Sheldon Christian's works.

AT POINT OF BREAK-THROUGH

Like a spitfire, landing on
A meadow, just as her gas is gone,

The midget moth touched the floor
Of the porcelain pot, to cruise no more.

She may have spiraled around inside,
Or fluttered down in awkward glide,

In either case, she felt no fear,
Because the light above was clear

Through the aperture in the mustard pot
Where spoon or pestle now was not.

But each time she climbed the pot's sheer wall
To wing it out, she'd bump and fall.

Again and again, she essayed flight
Yet could not gain the Greater Light.

And the harder, indeed, her brave wings flew,
Those wings prevented her passing through.

That she must fly, was her "mental" block:
She had only to fold her wings and walk.

Who knows at what apertures we too pause,
Unable to rise, not knowing the laws.

HER PENTECOST (A JUNGIAN POEM)

Like litter on
The landscape of the mind's terrain
Lay bits and bytes of programmed pain
Grown bitter on

But fewer now.
For, wounded Healer that she was,
She's cleared the ground of adverse cause
And soon will plow

And here and there
Plant new-germed seeds of consciousness
A loving, caring ministress
In trusting prayer.

Not now fear-tossed,
She awaits in peace the days to come,
Full confident of that Kingdom—
Her Pentecost.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST RETIREMENT HOMES

(We regret that we lack the space to give full details, but will at least list those homes maintained specifically for aging Unitarian Universalists.)

CALIFORNIA

"Sunset Hall"

2830 Francis Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90005 - Tel. 213/387-5277

Accommodates 40 persons in single and two room suites with private baths.
Full and diversified activities program.

"Adlai E. Stevenson House"

455 E. Charleston Rd., Palo Alto, CA 04306 - Tel. 415/494-1944

Contains 120 studio and 28 one-bedroom apartments, all with full kitchen.
Facilities include lounges, library, activity room, gardens, etc.

FLORIDA

"Jefferson Center"

930 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 33577 - Tel. 813/953-9585

An apartment community for persons 62 years of age or older,
of low-to-moderate income and in normal good health.

GEORGIA

"Shallowford House"

3191 Shallowford Rd., Atlanta, GA 30341 - Tel. 404/457-7887

A small, personal care home for six residents, with home cooked meals,
personal laundry service, transportation and monitoring or medications.

KENTUCKY

"Emerson Center"

2050 Garden Springs Dr., Lexington, KY 40504 - Tel. 606/278-0526

An 11 story building on spacious grounds for middle-income senior citizens
with an active program utilizing facilities at the U. of Kentucky.

MARYLAND

"Unitarian Universalist Housing Foundation"

9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814 - Tel. 301/564-1545

A non-profit organization of six local U.U. churches governing...
"Village House", an apartment community 17 miles from Washington, D.C.

MASSACHUSETTS

"Hale House and Barnard Services"

273 Clarendon St., Boston, MA 02116 - Tel. 617/536-3726

A licensed Practical Nurse or Nurse's Aide on duty at all times.
Special diets available. Varied program of group activities.

"The Sundial"

29 Merriam Pkwy., Fitchburg, MA 01420 - Tel. 617/345-1559

A 10 story building with 168 apartments and a full program.
In downtown Fitchburg.

"The Doolittle Universalist Home for Aged Persons"

16 Bird St., Foxboro, MA 02035 - Tel. 617/543-2131

Originally accepting residents for the remainder of their lives
in return for any property and monies possessed.
A limited number of boarding residents are now admitted also.

NEW YORK

"Hadley House"

P.O. Box 911, Plandome, NY 11030 - Tel. 516/944-6808

Built for Unitarian Universalists who are 62 years of age or older
and capable of independent living. Located in Port Washington on L.I.

OKLAHOMA

"All Souls Conservage Trust"

2952 S. Peoria, Tulsa, OK 74114 - Tel. 918/743-2808

Conservage provides a variety of supportive services for elderly or
handicapped persons living in their own homes or in a home owned by the Trust.

PENNSYLVANIA

"Unitarian Universalist Trust"

224 W. Tulpehocken St., Philadelphia, PA 19144 - Tel. 215/843-0809

Eligibility for admission is determined without regard to race, color,
national origin or sex. Preference for Unitarian Universalists.

TEXAS

"Emerson Place"

116 Lincoln Sq., Arlington, TX 76011 - Tel. 817/461-8800

Located in beautifully wooded setting, accessible to walking trails,
but also to all of the facilities of Dallas and Fort Worth.

UTAH

"Friendship Manor"

1320 E. 500 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84105 - Tel. 301/582-3100

Non-sectarian rental residence open to persons 62 years of age or handicapped.

VIRGINIA

"Culpepper Garden"

4435 No. Pershing Dr., Arlington, VA 22203 - Tel. 703/526-0162

Conveniently located living center provides companionship, secure housing,
recreation and independence for low and moderate income senior citizens.

CONTACT COUNSELING

After a great deal of discussion at several UURMA Conferences and Board Meetings, the organization has undertaken to finance a trial of what might be called: "Contact Counselling". In Maine and in the Vermont-New Hampshire District couples have been recruited to contact (hopefully to visit) any member or member couple experiencing a serious difficulty. To a great extent, their function will be similar to the "Good Offices" program of the UUMA, save that retired ministers and spouses rarely have problems with churches. Most commonly, the problem affecting our membership is that of sickness and negotiating the amount of costs to be assumed by Medicare and the insurance carrier. There is a tremendous amount of paper-work involved in this, but a person who is old and sick may need help and advice in successfully and promptly fulfilling all of the requirements.

Feeling that a couple would be most helpful in many cases, Bob & Helen Dick were secured for the Vermont-New Hampshire area. Earle & Petie McKinney will look after our membership in at least south and central Maine. It was recognized by the Board that trips of over a hundred miles cannot be expected, but both couples have agreed to do their best to look after such situations as may arise.

The UURMA is underwriting costs on this project but has only the vaguest idea as to what these may be. For this year, a sum of \$2,500 has been ear-marked for this effort, but to extend this service to other areas where we have numerous members will certainly cost a great deal more. The size of our income will probably determine the rate at which we extend this service. In the meantime, we would assure all members in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont that this service is being developed. In case of need, call:

The McKinneys - Tel. 657-2058
P.O. Box 130, Gray, Maine 04039

The Dicks - Tel. 886-8271
1 Walnut Way, Springfield, Vermont 05156

MAXIMS FOR THOSE DEPRESSED Particularly by Growing Older

Maryell Cleary

As an inspirational article, and also as filler material in all probability, we include these excellent maxims by the minister of our church in Lyons, Ohio.

BE OF GOOD FAITH:

The resources of the universe are still there and available. There are caring people; there is beauty; there is inner strength; there is love. And, while life and mind last, there is always the ability to do something, however small, for others.

BE OF GOOD CHEER:

Lift the spirits of others and they will lift yours. Tales of trouble and woe may appropriately be kept for professionals, and for the ears of a few close persons who understand.

BE AWARE OF THE HERE AND NOW:

Watch the grass moving in the breeze, feel the cool wind, listen to the voices of children, smell the smoke of the bonfire. Live in the moment, now, without regretting the past or being anxious for the future. (Easier to say than to do, but do it a little while each day and see what a difference that makes.)

LEARN SOMETHING NEW:

Learning is exciting. The opportunities are as close as the television set, the bookshelves, and the outdoors. Life is so much more interesting when you're learning.

ACCEPT YOURSELF AS YOU ARE:

So you have faults and bad habits, so what else is new! Don't we all? Unless they are suicidal ones, let them alone. Appreciate your good points and be supportive of the good person you are; stop trying to be a saint or a genius (unless, of course, that's what you are).

ACCEPT OTHER PEOPLE AS THEY ARE:

They aren't perfect, but neither are any of the rest of us. You can't change them; so appreciate and enjoy the good in them, and let the rest go. Appreciation and praise are so good for everyone, including the giver.

BE AVAILABLE TO THOSE WHO NEED YOU:

Look for that need, expressed or unexpressed; listen with all your attention; express your care and concern. Even a small gesture makes a difference. Whether it's a moment's smile, an hour's counsel, or the rest of a life of friendship and love, be there for them.

LEARN TO LIVE WITH PAIN:

This is a hard saying. There is always pain, psychic or physical, lurking; that is reality. Do what you can about it, and then let it recede into the background while you do something you can enjoy.

CELEBRATE THE HIGH POINTS:

No matter how low you are feeling, or how bad the day, there's always some moment that can be appreciated. Look for it. Celebrate it. Hold it as a talisman.

ALLOW YOURSELF A TREAT:

It doesn't have to be an expensive trip or a Rolls Royce...How about a hot fudge sundae? — a drive to the beach? — a long-distance phone call? Whatever suits your fancy's right for you.

DO IT NOW:

All those things you were going to do later on, when you retired, when you had more time: do them now. Now is the time you've been waiting for, looking forward to, perhaps being afraid of. Now is the time! Do it now!

These maxims were not written for some abstract or depressed people, nor even for some person in my congregation; they were written first in my journal, for myself. I find them helpful; perhaps someone else will also. M.C.

TO ALL RETIRED MINISTERS, SPOUSES, ETC....

If you are not receiving the U.U.M.A. Newsletter and would like to get it, please write to the editor at 1107 Harvey St., Raleigh, N.C. 27608. This applies equally to spouses of deceased U.U. ministers. We would be very happy to add you to our mailing list!

Charles Howe, Editor

OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE!

Word has been received that the Walpole Unitarian Church is open and may be available for a semi-retired minister. The congregation closes during the months of July and February. There is a parsonage involved and the cash salary, beyond the parsonage, would be in the neighborhood of \$8,000 to \$12,000. The church has a membership of 49.

If interested, write to Charles A. Gaines, Ministerial Settlement Director.

RETIREMENT SAGA

Vi Kochendoerfer

I've been retired nearly ten years and still haven't started on two or three projects I always said I was going to do when I did. Between trips (I've covered most of the world except Africa, South America and the Scandinavian countries, and will take off on the latter two if and when I find someone who'd like to join me!) I'm at home in Duluth, two blocks from Lake Superior and one block from a park with paths along a lovely creek with waterfalls. Just today I took my constitutional and had my picture taken by a Twin City couple who admired my Barrier Reef sweatshirt and had come to check on a sport where the husband had fished as a kid.

Further down I stopped to talk with a middle-aged couple who were picnicking on a rock beside the stream, ending up having wine and breadsticks and a whole hour of sharing ideas about our good feelings about Duluth. Turned out that they'd been married by a UU minister in Minneapolis.

I'm working on a book, an autobiography of what I call my "charmed life". I'm on page 385 and haven't even left Santa Fe from where I took off for the Gay Area to start a new phase of my life, and had anyone told me I'd end up in the UU ministry I'd have told them that they were utterly out of their mind!

After much prodding I've purchased a word processor but haven't as yet settled down to feeling comfortable with it. Just yesterday I did one of my Rube Goldberg jobs in remodeling my typing setup to accommodate the printer.

I'm a pack rat. Buy most of my clothes and loads of stuff that seems interesting even though at the time I haven't the faintest idea of what I'll do with it. So it seems I always have "just the right thing" to do such odd jobs rather than hiring someone else to do them.

I love all growing things and spend a lot of time in my yard planting many things I get from the woods. And I feed the birds...just love my chickadees, and have a running battle with the squirrels, who have a way of bettering me on every baffle I try. I smile as I sometimes see them sitting on the garage roof like a little Buddha, for I'm sure they're trying to figure out what to try next.

I've also become interested in Reincarnation, and found that when I did I actually had several volumes in my very own library which I'd not touched for I guess I wasn't quite ready. Did you all receive (as I've always felt might be the case) a huge volume entitled "REINCARNATION: THE PHOENIX FIRE MYSTERY" by Joseph Head and S.L. Cranston - with a card (A. Edgar Atkins, 200 E. 71st. St., NY, NY) slipped inside with a note "A gift for your library"? If any of you are interested too, I'd love to hear from you.

IN PASSING

In our previous issue we noted that our association journals do not regularly carry notice of deaths of spouses, who are certainly full and equal members of the UURMA. Since we have a need to know what is happening to one another, we shall carry brief obituaries of these, our friends and loved ones, when requested or permitted by surviving families. Anyway....

We would note the passing of Dorothy Yoder, wife of Dayton Yoder, last Christmas Eve after a long illness. She suffered from both Parkinson's Disease and Alzheimer's Disease, and her death was a blessing for her but a loss to all who knew her.

REACTIONS OF THE UUMA PRESIDENT TO THE RYE BEACH CONFERENCE

by Jack Mendelsohn

"I want you to know how much I appreciate the inclusion of surviving spouses in this conference. It is a wonderful idea, and I am very impressed with their full participation. It is obvious that they really feel included and, in turn, provide strength and leadership to the group.

"I am impressed, also, with the regular inclusion of spouses in all conferences of the Retired Ministers Association. Many of our UUMA chapters are hung up on this issue. They don't know whether to invite them for some sessions and not for others, or to bar them. There are unresolved feelings about these questions in the UUMA, but you have resolved them in a most inclusive spirit.

"I want to compliment you on the absence of wariness, one-up-manship, and barbed humor in this gathering. There is a relaxed ease with which you deal with one another. How refreshing it is for me to be in the midst of that. Your approach to program is equally relaxed. It is a rich program, but with lots of free time; with nobody rushing from one thing to another. There is an abundance of stress, which I find very refreshing.

"I want to compliment you also on the fact that instead of trying to worship repeatedly - morning, noon and night - you had one very well-organized and very impressive worship service in the middle of the conference. I found the quality of music, the selection of readings, the quality of the sermon and the quality of general participation by the congregation to be most rewarding. And there were no gimmicks. A lot of the worshipping done in our ranks these days tends to rely on various kinds of gimmicks or exotic experiments. Your worship service was spiritually solid and gimmick-free."

[All who were at Rye Beach Conference will regretfully recognize that this is not what Jack said. Speaking without a manuscript, he gave one of the most humorous analyses of the occasion, and his ten-minute greetings were stretched out to half an hour with laughter. Unfortunately, no one took notes, and understandably, Jack may not want all of his remarks reported. The material above is probably what he intended to say and we appreciate his support for our movement. - A.Q.P., Editor]

WHAT ARE YOU READING????

A couple of years ago we asked members to send in very brief (three or four sentence) book reviews of their current reading. Quite a number responded and provided plenty of evidence that we were not stagnating in retirement. We also hope that such reports may have stimulated others to get and read something another was finding worthwhile.

I would like to try this again. Let us share the titles and a brief description of what we find stimulating.

Now, personally, I have recently read my daughter-in-law's recent biography of her grandmother, "Belle Moskowitz", who was the first American woman to exercise real political power as Al Smith's confidential secretary, social conscience, campaign manager, publicist, etc. I recommend it.

WHAT ARE YOU WRITING????

Occasionally, all too occasionally, our readers send in items they think deserving to be in print. Most of these end up in a subsequent issue, and we can usually use more than we get.

Send either to:

Albert Q. Perry, Editor
16 Shackford Street
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