

**Unitarian
Universalist
Retired
Ministers
Association**

August 1995

An Association of retired Unitarian Universalist ministers, their spouses,
and the surviving spouses of deceased Unitarian Universalist ministers

Volume X

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1995-1996**

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ELDERBERRIES

Number 4

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MAX MEDIA

When Gordon McKeeman, John Cummins and I joined the UURMA Board in 1991, it represented the first involvement of any of us outside New England. In the early years, the Board members came in the night before but the people who got us going were close enough to make the trip to and from "25" on the same day.

That pattern continued but it was obviously inefficient, however, for some to come so far for such brief meetings. More and more matters kept coming up on our agenda with no adequate opportunity to discuss them.

So, we began gathering for dinner on Tuesday evening for more open and unpressured discussion and to meet with occasional guests from the UUA staff. The meeting resumed Wednesday morning and continued through lunch. This past Spring we extended our session, beginning Monday evening and continuing through Wednesday lunch. We did this initially to save expense by reducing our meetings to two per year. I am not alone, however, in having found this longer session far more productive than any in the past and I hope we continue this schedule.

I speak of this because, with the addition of Ginny Crane to our ranks, our Board is now truly continental. We have, so to speak, come of age as an organization and as a full participant in the life of our denominational family.

At this point I am eager to pay tribute to Harold Hadley and all the others who launched the UURMA; to Keith Munson, who has presided over our growing pains with forthrightness, vision, and unfailing good humor; and to our other retiring Board members: Helen Dick, whose careful and sensitive leadership of our Caring Network has brought us closer together than we have ever been before, and Vi Kochendoerfer, whose wisdom has been buttressed by her emergence as a published author, an event in which we all take pride.

I look forward to the next two years, eager to help lift our modest organization to the level of effectiveness and recognition within our Unitarian Universalist family it deserves. I shall welcome your suggestions and your help always.

--Max Gaebler

MORE ABOUT ELDERBERRIES

A CENTENARIAN, Eva Schwemin, living in the Presidential Convalescent Home in Quincy, Massachusetts, attributed her long life to hard work on the family farm, Mass every day at 7 a.m., and a glass or two of elderberry wine which her mother made. Furthermore, she has carried the tradition with her into the convalescent home. There's just something about ELDERBERRIES!

HERE'S THE LATEST ON UURMA CONFERENCES

NORTHEAST

Registrars Bill and Barbara DeWolfe report that all 56 of the spaces available have been reserved for the October 3-5 gathering at LaSalette Conference Center, Attleboro, Massachusetts, and that a capacity crowd is expected. At this juncture, if you have not already made your reservation, the best the Committee can offer is a place on a waiting list. Should any cancellations be received, you'll be given a reservation.

Registrars John and Drucilla Cummins indicate that there are still openings for the Mid-Continent Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, September 29-October 1. But the deadline for reservations may have passed by the time this reaches your mailbox. Drs. Thomas Anderson and Irv Miller will speak on "Myths About Stroke" and "Medical Photography," respectively.

MID-CONTINENT

FLORIDA No word yet regarding the Mid-Winter Conference in Florida. The next issue of *Elderberries* will contain the latest on the possibilities there.

Rosemary Matson sent this report on the March 1995 gathering in Cupertino, California.

WESTERN

"We did indeed have another successful UURMAPA Conference according to the evaluations expressed at our final meeting. The program was rich mix with Margaret Gooding and Aron Gilmartin sharing their Odysseys; Eva Gilmartin leading our daily chapel sharing; Shirley Ranck introducing the two popular feminist curricula, *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* and *Rise Up and Call Her Name* coming out of the UU Women and Religion movement; Dorothy Patterson, president of UUSC, describing the exciting things that organization is currently doing; Marge and Fred Keip (ministers of the UU Church on the Monterey Peninsula) presenting the findings of the *Book of J*. Fred had just come from CONVO so gave us a glimpse of what happened there. One delight for us was a session with Marianist Brother Joseph, taking us through the story of the Brothers' own building of the unique Center and furnishing it with exquisite art, sculpture, quilts, books and gardens. It is indeed one of the most beautiful places on this earth. Everyone who has ever been there loves it and votes unanimously to return the following year."

The Planning Committee for 1996 is Eva and Aron Gilmartin, Chairs; Al and Mary Thelander, Treasurer and Registrar; Chris Bailey, Margaret Gooding and others

DEADLINE
NOVEMBER 1995 ELDERBERRIES
OCTOBER 15 1995

TENTH ANNIVERSARY

On October 23-24, 1985, a Coming Out Party and First Assembly of the Retired Unitarian Universalist Ministers, their Spouses, and surviving Spouses took place at Maria Assumpta Academy, Petersham, Massachusetts. Seventy-nine people attended, the charter members of UURMA. Sixty eight of these are still alive.

The temporary Officers were:

President:	Harold Hadley
Vice-President:	Arnold Westwood
Secretary:	Walter Kring
Treasurer:	William Gardiner
Newsletter Editor:	George Marshall
Support and Program:	Horace Westwood

Workshop topics included: "Name and Bylaws," "Surviving as a Spouse," "Creating Support Systems," "Financial Survival," "A UU Retired Talent Bank," "Newsletter Guidelines," and "Spreading the Story."

In the ten years since, the UURMA has evolved into an organization with a four-pronged program: A quarterly newsletter; advocacy addressing the rights and plights of retired ministers, their spouses and surviving spouses; a Caring Network; and regular regional conferences. Some issues are still being discussed and debated, such as a possible change of name. All this in an organization that survives and occasionally thrives on voluntary contributions from members, that embraces spouses and surviving spouse and is operated by a quite remarkable and changing group of senior citizens.

Celebrations of the milestones in UURMA history will be suggested parts of the 1995-96 regional conferences, including thankful remembrance of those living and dead who have brought us this far.

ELECTION RESULTS

Rev. Theodore Webb reported the receipt of 196 ballots from UURMA members which resulted in the election to two-years terms on the UURMA Board of:

President:	Rev. Max Gaebler, Madison, Wisconsin
Vice-President:	Rev. William DeWolfe, Springfield, Massachusetts
Board Members	Virginia Crane, Santa Barbara, California Rev. Farley Wheelwright, Boston, Massachusetts
Nominating Committee	Rev. Maurice Cobb, Chair, West Newfield, Massachusetts Rev. Maryell Cleary, East Lansing, Michigan Rev. Alfred Henriksen, Rancho Palos Verdes, California

NAME CHANGE REFERENDUM

225 Ballots submitted as guidance to the UURMA Board were tallied as follows:

Retain Present Name	98
Change to Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners	61
Change to Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association	53
Change to Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Spouses Association	13

Interpreting the results is a task to be undertaken by the Board.

FIFTY YEAR HONOREES

Eugene Adams
Albert D'Orlando
Leon Fay
Robert Holmes
Walter Royal Jones

Donald Lawson
Gordon McKeeman
Jack Mendelsohn
Carl Seaburg
Malcolm Sutherland

FIFTY YEARS OF MINISTRY

Fifty years is 2600 Sundays -

That's about 2,000 sermons -

A few memorable, most mercifully forgettable.

Maybe 200 child dedications.

How many weddings - formal and otherwise?

So many sittings with people, grieving

-- for children killed in accidents

-- for those so cornered by their lives that
suicide seemed the only way

-- for those who died "too soon" "too painfully" or "too late"
remembering again and again "dust thou art...."

A myriad of potlucks attended -

and so far an equal number survived.

Newsletter columns - letters - words that fly in joy,

in sorrow and in anger, in praise.

Money raised - millions of dollars actually.

Money given to the church, the school, to the Red Cross

(I also gave Blood - most of it to the Red Cross)

Social problems - let's see - was it 20, 200 or 2,000 -

I forget.

Social problems solved - none that I can remember.

Books - bought - borrowed 1,143

Books read 27

Books told I should read 7,025

Counselling the distraught - the discouraged - the

defeated - the down trodden - abused and confused.

The number is in the hundreds, the effects mostly

imponderable.

That's at least 500 monthly meetings of the Board,

and sometimes of the interested, concerned and devoted.

Thousands of miles traveled, weather notwithstanding.

In a few odd moments, wondering how to

beckon people toward the Holy.

Would I do it -- again?

Without a moment's hesitation!

GBM

(One of the ten 50-year addresses delivered at the 1995 UUMA Worship.)

POTPOURRI

"One of the pleasures of moving back to Maine twenty-five years ago was to live in the parsonage of a small town's community church. It was as good as any city church parsonage. Five years later we moved into the house I'd built out of wood salvaged from a barn given us. At the community church parsonage the rhubarb needed to be thinned, which I offered to do, and would gladly accept the roots dug out and transplant them to the garden area Belle had picked out.

"Today the weather turned milder and the rhubarb stalks looked mature enough to harvest. I seem to be a football for medical specialists to pass around, my most recent appointment with the ear doctor has left me with more vertigo than I had when I entered his office. So my wife of nearly fifty-five years offered to bring in enough rhubarb so I could make up the first batch of the season. It looks good enough to eat, but it isn't supper time yet!"

Al Niles; North Sebago, Maine

"What Bucky wrote strikes a chord, and I could add another unfortunate trend: a de-emphasis of intellectualism among the more recent ministers.

"But let's be fair. I see the decline in intellectualism as balanced by an increased emphasis on nurturing among those same ministers. This is what they see as the heart of ministry. I personally think the balance scales have been pushed a bit too far, but they needed pushing.

"Most of us remember our disgust with the ministers' meetings of the 1960's and earlier, which often seemed more concerned with one-upmanship than with mutual support in a tough profession. Dave Sammons said it well: the great change that has taken place in the UU ministry has been its feminization. We were virtually all male in the old days; now the influence of women prevails, and has made us more human. I think that one change makes up for all the negatives."

Jeff Selth; Carson, California

CARING NETWORK

Changes

NORTHEAST

(To replace Kenneth Hawkes)
Rev. Keith and Peggy Munson
9 Island View Drive
Saco, Maine 04072
(207) 282-2204

(To replace Herbert Weeks)
Rev. Joseph Majeau
84 Mechanic Street
Westbrook, Maine 04092

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST (Southern California)

(To replace the Cranes)
Rev. Christine Wetzel
7109 Ruana Street
San Diego, California 92119

THOMAS JEFFERSON (To replace Edith Christiansen)

Rev. Charles and Claudine Grady
419 4th Avenue W, Apt A
Hendersonville, North Carolina 28739
(704) 697-7325

FROM HELEN DICK

"As outgoing chair of the Caring Network, I want to thank the contact person(s) in each district who have kept the Caring Network active! I wish my successor, Ginny Crane, the same cooperative spirit!"

THE WHEEL OF LIFE**MARY ANN TAIT****March 7, 1995; Age 60**

Surviving: Husband

James Kenneth Morrison Tait (Ken)
Eigerlea Yieldshields Road
Carluke, Lanarkshire Scotland M18 4QF**JOHN HENRY HANHISALO****April 24, 1995****COSSIETTE (CONNIE) CONLEY****May 1, 1995; AGE 56**

Surviving: Cousin

Marilyn Epps
Box 8003
4375 Pineview
Walled Lake, Michigan 48390**JOHN EVAN EVANS****May 8, 1995; Age 77**

Surviving: Wife

Jan Evans-Tiller
835 Gardenia Avenue
Royal Oak, Michigan 48067**ROBERT WINCHESTER KARNAN, Jr.****July 3, 1995; Age 50**

Surviving: Wife

Terry Karnan
c/o Unitarian Universalist Church
292 State Street
Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801**EDWARD TRIVETT ATKINSON****July 24, 1995; Age 60**

Surviving: Wife

Sally Atkinson
100 Elm Street
Cohasset, Massachusetts 02025**JANE (WELCH) LAURIAT****July 30, 1995**

Surviving: Husband

The Rev. Nathaniel Lauriat
30 Creek Rock Road
Sedona, Arizona 86351**JOHN RUSKIN CLARK, Jr****July 26, 1995; Age 83**

Surviving: Wife

Alma Jeanette Clark
4500 Gilbert Street, #310
Oakland, California 94611

Meditation on Ministry

I have never fully understood why I am a minister...
I am content not to understand it fully...

It takes many trades and professions
to get the world up in the morning,
feed it, care for it, enjoy it, and put it to bed.
Then do it all over again the next day and the next.

One of these professions is that of a minister.
It has its importance along with the rest.
It is the profession that helps people celebrate the holy moments.
It still honors the Sabbath.
It believes in the possibilities of the unfettered human soul
in a community of searchers after the good.

I feel the honor and the privilege and the mystery of being a minister.
I am grateful for accident and intention that called me to such an investment of my life.

... from *Awakened From the Forest*, by Webster Kitchell

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST RETIRED MINISTERS ASSOCIATION

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