

Elderberries

Unitarian Universalist
Retired Ministers and Partners Association



Volume 35

Number 4

AUTUMN, 2019



Rainbow History Flows On

FALL CONFERENCE REPORT — OCTOBER 7-10
Wisdom House Retreat Center in Litchfield, CT



By Jaco ten Hove



Panel #2: Susan Rak (moderator), Lucy Hitchcock, Carlton Elliott Smith, Lindi Ramsden (Zooming in) and Craig Matheus.

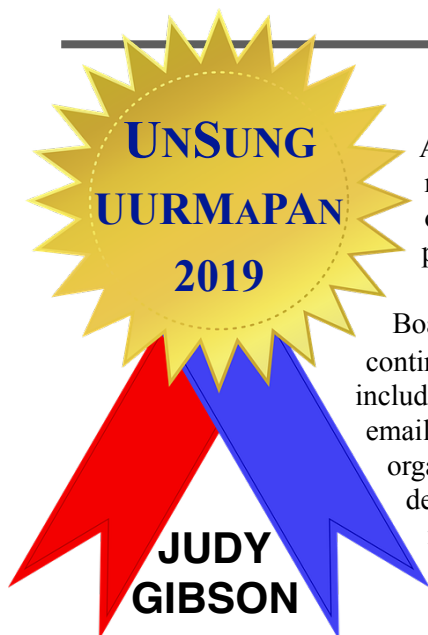
“Celebrating the UU
Journey toward
LGBTQIA Rights”

“The earth is
indeed moving
beneath us.”
—Jay Deacon

“Wisdom Has Built Herself a House,” read the house banner that stood behind all the stirring presentations at this historical event—a convocation of 55 attendees buoyed even more by 20 additional folks for the main day of programming. Opportunities abounded to share stories and connect in both ongoing and new relationships of meaning, as was true at our previous gathering near San Antonio, TX, in February—the first of this two-part series honoring the 50th anniversary year of the Stonewall Uprising through a UU lens.

Also like the previous event, most of the conference presentations were captured by a professional videographer, for archival purposes and as material to support the publication of a book, the newly selected editor

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Early on at the Fall conference our latest Unsung Award was bestowed upon **Judy Gibson**, “in recognition of vital contributions and generous service on behalf of the community of retired UU ministers & partners.” President **Diane Miller** did the honors.

Following her outstanding service on the UURMaPA Board as Secretary (2014–18), Judy (of Knoxville, TN) has continued to carry a portfolio with a “nameless job,” which included the task of announcing deaths of UURMaPans by email and coordinating the flow of information and organizational actions when a member dies. Judy developed a spreadsheet to track the multiple steps involved in notifying and publishing news of deaths, making for a more even and consistent follow-through

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**Jay Atkinson and
Roger Rochester**
OBITUARY EDITORS

Contact info for most of the folks above can be found in the most current online Directory under **Publications** at www.uurmapa.org (password: WISDOM).

EDITORIAL NOTES

These days, in my retirement, I've chosen to act locally while thinking globally: I try to facilitate greater movement in the compost and recycling realms, including personally in my own backyard, as it were. This just seems like low-hanging fruit in an arena I can do something about right here, right now, rather than just passive hand-wringing about sea level rise or ranting about certain retrograde politicians.

But like at least some of you, I suspect, I've been trying to digest the rather discouraging reports about how much of what we send in recycling directions apparently never gets there, for a variety of sad reasons. Ughh. I'm not sure if the recycling industry has bottomed out yet, but a reality check is certainly underway.

And since I'm relatively studious on the subject and have positioned myself as something of a public expert in this field (I actually got trained and certified as a "Master Composter/Recycler"), I'm regularly faced with honest and frustrated inquiries, sometimes bordering on despair. My current, hopefully helpful response to the reasonable "Why bother?" question draws on a familiar, pertinent and still inspirational Gandhian message:

Be the change you want to see. Be the change you want to see.

Yes, we don't always know what ultimately happens to the materials we put in our curbside bins, and the recycling industry is indeed in shakedown mode. But the human species has proven to be creatively resilient, and already there are innovations emerging to counteract distressing trends in waste pollution, which are especially virulent for plastics. Those hopeful stories are out there, too, although like lots of Good News, they tend not to get much press. And the innovations have not scaled up enough yet to have the impact really needed.

But I see Our Job as *being the change we want to see*, meaning we can behave as if there were proper pathways already in place—we can act as if it matters now, even if we have some evidence to the contrary. It *does* matter *now*, and if we want to be more a part of the solution than the problem, we can help move the ball a bit farther downfield by building upright everyday habits around the everyday waste that comes out of our households. (Although one key technique is certainly to limit the number of single-use plastics we bring *into* our homes!)

Because the alternative—cynicism, despair, giving up, etc.—is no beacon at all, and Americans of all stripes (perhaps especially UUs) can do better, I have to believe. Let's make it so. Landfill, be damned.

And as Michael Schur (creator of "The Good Place" on Netflix) said in an interview: "There's more value in trying than not trying."

THE DEVIL'S WORKSHOP



Carry on, friends.

elderberries@uurmapa.org

—Jaco*

NOTE TO ONLINE READERS: You'll see some words or titles in **bold, red italics**, which indicate that they contain web links. I avoid standard underlining of links in respect for print readers, since the links do not translate into that medium and can distract instead.

President's Column

*"We are desperate
for a new ethic of solidarity
with each other to replace
the hyper-individualism
that has marked our
culture for so long."*

—Bill McKibbin, Founder, 350.org

By ➡
**DIANE
MILLER**



The annual Prairie Festival at The Land Institute brings people from all over the country to Salina, Kansas, where I live. At the most recent event writer and activist Bill McKibbin delivered urgent truths about climate change and where we are headed. He spoke of how right it felt, after a recent demonstration in the Northeast, to be in the basement of the jail, shackled by the ankles to the wall, and how change is going to require some discomfort.

Meanwhile, Greta Thunberg and her young peers are taking action. As McKibbin pointed out, "We've taken the biggest problem in the world and assigned it to High School juniors to solve." Speaking to the elders present, he firmly suggested that this is not a case where young people need to be the cannon fodder. Maybe an arrest record at age 19 can cause problems, but after a certain age, he asked, "What the hell are they going to do to you?" He described one protester who, expecting to be arrested, had a sign around his neck: "World War II Vet. Handle with Care."



McKibbin declared that today the issue is TIME. "Dr. King used to quote from the Massachusetts abolitionist Theodore Parker. He'd say, 'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.' This may take a while but we're gonna win—a comforting thought." But then McKibbin added an updated version: "The arc of the physical universe is short, and it bends toward heat. If we don't win soon, then we have no chance."

An earlier UURMaPA Conference asked, "What Are Old People For?" One role, for some of us, is to do what needs to be done, to put ourselves on the line, so that young people will see elders invested in their future.

Having looked at how we made a difference in LGBTQIA justice struggles, can we make a difference for Climate Justice? There are many justice issues, and many intersect. The UURMaPA Board will be talking about our carbon footprint in future meetings. Please send your ideas our way.

— Diane

**25 YEARS
OF PAST FALL
GATHERINGS AT
ATTLEBORO, MA
1994–2018
THEMES**



HELP!
My life just passed through
the fire of thought!

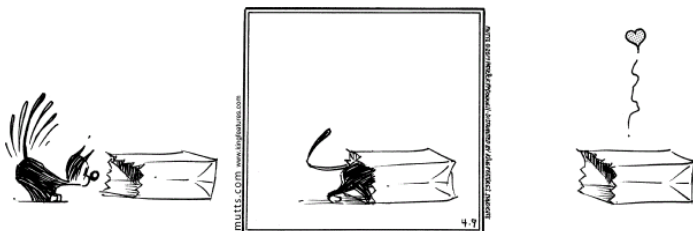
The Summer, 2019, issue of *Elderberries* featured a retrospective by UURMaPA Historian **Susan LaMar** that honored the site of the last 25 of our autumn conferences, including some intriguing comments by participants.

We have now outgrown that venue (LaSalette Conference Center) and this issue contains a cover story (and centerfold) about our latest fall retreat at a new site.

But to complete the Attleboro retrospective, Susan also compiled the intriguing list below of presenters and topics that stirred attendees at those 25 historic sessions.

- 1994 Getting to Know You
- 1995 **David Bumbaugh** — The Heart of Our Faith
- 1996 **Dorothy Emerson** — UU Women's Heritage Society; **Ken McLean** on his overseas work
- 1997 **Harvey Cox** — Cultural Diversity and the religious community's responsibility
- 1998 **Ralph Mero** — Enhancing the quality of our retirement; **Judy Hoehler** of the Mass. Cong'l Charitable Society; **Glen Snowden** of the Society for Ministerial Relief; **Rhys Williams** of the Unitarian Service Pension Society
- 1999 Transitions — Highlighting our relations with former churches; **Kim Beach** with videos on Parables of James Luther Adams
- 2000 **Nick Cardell** on his ordeal with School of the Americas; UUA candidates for President and Financial Adviser
- 2001 New UUA Pres. **Bill Sinkford** on The Vision and Practice of the UUA today; **Jack Mendelsohn** on UU Epiphany at Selma

- 2002 **Peter Richardson** on Four Spiritualities — A Celebration of Diversity within UUs and in the World; **Dick Fewkes** on the Partner Church Program
- 2003 **Fred Campbell** — Four Faiths: A Unitarian Universalist Exploration of the Diversity, Roots and Growth of Religious Belief Systems
- 2004 **Charles Clements**, UUSC — Social Responsibility and Outreach; **Rob Cavanaugh**, UUA Washington Office for Advocacy; **Devorah Greenstein**, UUA Program Assoc. for Accessibility
- 2005 **Bob Thayer** — Everything to Lose: Our Getting on a Learning Curve; feeling the pain of American Indians; where their visions are taking us now
- 2006 **Earl Holt** — Engaging Our Theological Diversity about the Commission on Appraisal Report
- 2007 Retirees: Rules, Rights, and Roles
- 2008 **Peter Morales & Laurel Hallman** share visions as candidates for UUA President.
- 2009 **Makanah Morriss & Ralph Mero** — A Helpful Guide to Retirement for UU Ministers
- 2010 **Sue Nichols, George Brandenburg, Pat Hoertdoerfer & Brad Greeley** — One Lifetime is Too Short
- 2011 **David Hubner, Doris Hunter & Alan Deale** — How My Mind has Changed Since Merger
- 2012 UUMA Task Force on Retired Ministers — How Shall We Be With One Another? (finding and sharing best practices for right relations among retired, interim & settled ministers & their families)
- 2013 What Wellness Looks and Feels Like in Retirement
- 2014 **Daniel Lord Smail**— Deep History: Why it Matters
- 2015 **Dan McKanan**, author of *Prophetic Encounters: Religion and The American Radical Tradition* — UU Prophetic Scholarship in the 21st Century
- 2016 **Andy and Chris Backus** — The Creative Process: Minds at Work Together?
- 2017 **Laurel Hallman** — Strengthening Our Souls in These Troubled Times; Who are we as elders in these times?
- 2018 **Kyrié Carpenter** — Changing Aging (using William H. Thomas's book *What Are Old People For: How Elders Will Save the World*)





JOYOUS CONNECTIONS

By Anne Spatola

(below right, with Rev. Theresa Novak)

I see joy all around me. Sitting in my backyard and looking at the plants and flowers I've cultivated brings a smile. Joy implies beauty, which I find in so many unlikely places.

I tend to be an active person



and I need to be "doing" in order to avoid the ruts or down times of life. Over the years, I have managed to add to and improve upon the ways I look for the positive in life. I have found that excessive stress impacts my physical health as well as my psychological being. As a result of genetics, I have been on blood pressure meds since my mid 40s. Thus, I learned early that the choices I made would directly affect my life. My father died at 55 from a massive stroke. Consequently, for my career path, I chose State Government as it would enable me to retire at 55 after 25 years of service. And I did so in 2006, which was ideal with the twins going off to college and spouse Theresa to her internship in Annapolis.

Soon after my hypertension diagnosis, I began exercising several times a week. At the gym, I found that I could put aside all the built-up stress in my life and feel completely renewed afterward. I learned to discipline myself over the years and I go to the gym three times a week for at least 90 minutes each time. It may be hard to understand the connection of exercising to joy. But this is truly a source of joy for me. When I exercise, I am taking care of my mental and physical self. The tensions I may have experienced that day are temporarily relieved or even eliminated. I can think more clearly of possible solutions to a dilemma and I am more relaxed. Obviously, it is a good feeling and those around me are happier, too. Hiking either alone or with friends can also be most uplifting. On a trail, I discover new terrain, take in my surroundings and allow myself to be part of something bigger, more spiritual.

When we moved to Maryland, I began a career of volunteering in the public schools starting with 6th graders. Currently, I go to an elementary school where all the children are English-learning immigrants, from Central America primarily. These past three years, I've assisted 1st graders with reading and math skills, a labor of love. The children thrive on smiles and academic guidance as we bond, sharing their home life and day-to-day experiences. It is a very special relationship and since I don't have grandchildren, they are an amazing substitute. It is most heartwarming when I begin to see the results of my efforts.

NOTE to ALL UURMaPAns (ministers and partners):
Don't hide your light under a bushell! Let friendly peers
know what's animating your latest creative phase.
Write us about the JOYS in your life, such as:
"I always wanted to XYZ, and now I am!"
"I discovered I can XYZ!" or "It feels great now to XYZ!"
Send submissions to Jaco: elderberries@uurmapa.org

I often use some of my limited Spanish to communicate with the non-English speakers. I will ask how they are and then I get a response in Spanish. Last year, a new boy who only spoke Spanish responded to me in English and he seemed so proud of himself. The children are incredibly determined to learn and want to do well. Sadly, there are not enough volunteers, given the needs of the school, and parents struggle with multiple jobs and limited abilities. Therefore, my school involvement gives me more satisfaction and joy than some of the social justice work I do. It isn't easy and I often notice that I get more of a workout after a couple of hours with the children than I do at the gym.

This summer, Theresa and I took a monthlong road trip after General Assembly (in Spokane, WA). We returned to many of our favorite places in the Canadian Rockies—a wonderful experience! We first went there when we were in our mid 20s and still new in our relationship. After children, we came back, frequently sharing our love of this land with them. Now that we are both retired, we are experiencing it in a new way.

However, my greatest joy is being able to take walks and even hike with Theresa again. For years, she has had some health issues which limited her activities. Walking together and knowing how good she feels about her progress is absolutely awesome! I look forward to more hikes together and wilder, even more joyous outdoor activities after she fully recovers from her recent knee surgery. ☆☆☆

Unsung Award to JUDY GIBSON *(con't. from Page 1)*

by the many volunteers involved. We could call that nameless job the "Obituary Coordinator." She created a job description for these tasks, which she will hand off to **Cathie Severance** at the end of this calendar year.

Likewise with our UURMaPA Bylaws and some other documents, where Judy has continued to update them after her terms of service on the Board. She also maintained a Succession List of our Board and Nominating Committee positions as well as other off-Board volunteer functions, so we know who has served and when their terms conclude. "Better to rotate volunteer leaders than to reinvent the wheel."

Judy has a gift for clarity, and skills to notice details, see what needs to be done and follow through, all of which have streamlined our operations, helping us to be better at giving our attention to each other.

Partnered with Gordon Gibson, Judy has a spouse's deep understanding of ministry and Unitarian Universalism. In the old theological debate of salvation by works or by grace, Judy clearly has nailed it in the works department. She is a doer. And we so appreciate that in our voluntary association.

Yet it is her grace that is salvific. Judy's warmth, good humor, curiosity, brilliance, generosity & graciousness make such a difference to all who have the pleasure of knowing her.

And so we honor and thank Judy Gibson for her service among us as a leader, volunteer, and partner. —DM



FROM JUDY: *Thank you for the Unsung Award! I was pleased and honored to accept this award for my five-plus years of service to the organization, on and beyond the Board.*

*I want to let everyone know that the \$500 gift that came with the award is now donated to support the **Living Legacy Pilgrimage Scholarship Fund**, so more people can travel South and experience first-hand the places and people who changed our country in the Civil Rights Movement. This project is close to my heart, since my husband Gordon and I started taking people on these pilgrimages in 2004.*

*The next Alabama-focused **Pilgrimage** will be March 25-29, 2020, and registration is now open—go to www.uulivinglegacy.org to get more info. Sacred sites include Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church, Rosa Parks Museum, and the new lynching memorial and Legacy Museum, as well as memorable sites in Selma. —JG*



UU Rainbow History Project **UPDATE** By Judy Welles, Coordinator

Enriched by the depth of sharing at the Fall Conference, the UU Rainbow History Project is chugging along full steam. **A FEW EXAMPLES:**

We have found an editor for the **BOOK** we have long envisioned! The Rev. **Diana McLean**, settled minister of the Peterborough (NH) UU Church, is very pleased to take up the reins of this last (and perhaps most visible) part of our UURMaPA project. Diana has edited four other book manuscripts, she has a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Naropa University, and before ministry she worked as a freelance editor and writer. We are delighted to welcome her onto the team.

Diana attended the Fall Conference in Litchfield in order to deepen her knowledge of the project and meet some of the key collaborators. She wrote later, "I am delighted to have been selected for this role. As one half of a same-sex UU clergy couple, I have a deep respect and gratitude for those pioneers who paved the way for this to be almost unremarkable in our denomination today. I enjoyed meeting many of you at the October conference, and look forward to learning more of your stories as I work on the book."

I (Judy) am delighted to have a co-conspirator for the project, as my taking over Dorothy Emerson's role as Coordinator has proven challenging. Dorothy's spouse, Donna Clifford, has been most helpful in sending me Dorothy's files, and I see clearly what a vision she had for the project. I hope that we will be able to honor that vision.

Thank you for your generosity with the **FAITHIFY** Campaign that we ran over the summer. Through it, we raised an additional \$3,000 to put toward this project, and received nearly \$600 in meaningful memorial contributions for Dorothy as well as direct donations.

Another subtle benefit of the Faithify campaign was to broaden awareness of the project, gleaning for us several contributions to the website as well as some increased financial security.

I continue to receive and prepare materials for the **WEBSITE** <https://uurainbowhistory.net/> which is becoming richer and more nuanced by the day. *Please think about what you have in your files that would be useful for our collection:* sermons, of course (especially "coming out" sermons to congregations); newspaper articles; liturgical elements; personal reflections, etc. Chances are that if you send it to us, it will appear on our web site. Please send submissions to BOTH coordinator@uurainbowhistory.net (me, Judy) and to editor@uurainbowhistory.net (Diana McLean), so we can decide where your offering may best be used.

This website will continue to be a repository of materials about the UUA's progress toward full legal, professional and clergy rights for LGBTQ+ UUs. We are so proud of UURMaPA for visualizing the project in the first place, and for working so hard to make it succeed. ☆☆☆

Housing Allowance Tax Exemption for Retired Clergy

Clergy participants in the UU Organizations Retirement Plan who receive funds (distributions) from their account during 2019 will receive a 1099-R form from TIAA by the end of January, 2020. Be sure that your residential and mailing addresses are up to date in your TIAA profile. Call TIAA at **800-842-2829** with any questions about how your information is shown, and to update or verify your beneficiaries as well.

All or a portion of any income received from your denominational retirement plan may be taken as an allowable tax exemption from income when you complete your 2019 tax return *only if*:

1. You can document that the monies distributed from the denominational plan were a.) due to Exercise of Ministry, and b.) actually spent on qualified housing-related expenses during the tax year; **and**
2. The amount you exclude is the **lesser** of those Actual Expenses or the “Fair Rental Value” (FRV) of your residence, furnished, plus utilities and appurtenances, such as a garage.



By the end of January, 2020, the UUA’s Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, Andrew McGeorge, will be mailing the standard memo regarding this topic; it includes a worksheet and can be attached to your tax return. (*Note that the IRS does not permit the spouse of a*

deceased minister to claim the clergy housing exemption; please contact your qualified clergy tax adviser with any questions, as we in the UUA Office of Church Staff Finances are not tax advisers or financial planners.)

Lastly, please remember to verify that you have followed the IRS requirement to take a minimum distribution if you have attained **both** age 70.5 or better, **and** are retired. Refer to the “RMD” or “MRD” when speaking with TIAA or your tax person.

—Linda Rose

UU Organizations Retirement Plan
Director: retirementplan@uua.org



Join Online
Conversations about
Proposed UUMA
Guideline Changes

UUMA members in UURMaPA have an online opportunity (via the video conferencing program ZOOM) to discuss the proposed changes to the Guidelines prior to Ministry Days 2020. **Art Severance** and **Diane Miller** will facilitate the sessions, following a Study Guide. Participants will create a covenant and participate in the full series of four conversations. The first is 90 minutes and subsequent sessions are 60 minutes each.

One group (“Tortoises”) will spread out the conversations over several months on second

Tuesdays: Jan 7, Feb 11, April 14, and May 12 at 1:00 PM Eastern.

Another group (“Hares”) will focus the sessions into a tighter time frame on four consecutive **Fridays: March 20 & 27, April 3 & 10** at 2:00 pm Eastern.

To sign up, email **Diane** at president@uurmapa.org. Your phone or computer will need to run the free version of ZOOM. Instructions and reminders will be sent. ☆☆☆



Nominating Committee Rarin’ To Go

by **Barbara Wells ten Hove**, NomCom Chair

The UURMaPA Nominating Committee works regularly to find good folks from our organization—ministers and partners—to fill elected positions (that begin on July 1). This coming year we have five positions open: Treasurer, Secretary, Board At-Large (Conferences portfolio), and two Nominating Committee slots.

Good news on that last pair of slots: Both **Wayne Arnason** and I, who will finish our two-year terms at the end of June 2020, will stand for re-election. (This is the first full year of the new five-member Nominating Committee and we will be sharing the work with newly elected members **Judy Welles, Judy Gibson** and **Barry Andrews**.)

The other three Board positions, currently filled by **Dave Hunter** (treasurer), **Barbara Child** (secretary) and **Ginger Luke** (At-Large) will need to be filled. While the elected positions do not begin their service until July 1, 2020, the NomCom’s work must be completed by Jan. 15, 2020. So, if you (or someone you know) is interested in serving UURMaPA, please contact me ASAP at nominations@uurmapa.org. —BWtH

Fall Conference Report, *continued from Page 1*

“Celebrating the UU

of which, **DIANA McLEAN** (settled minister at the Peterborough, NH, UU Church), was introduced.

Learning our way around a new site for the first time in 25 autumns, we first touched base personally in small groups and then, led by **RUSS SAVAGE**, we honored 18 recently deceased colleagues and partners, including *Hugo Holleroth, Gretchen & Ray Manker, Ed Searl, David A. Johnson, Judith Walker-Riggs, Carolyn Colbert, Erinn Melby, Dorothy Emerson, and Clark Olsen.*

In the morning we began a very full day of activity with inspiring and illuminating chronicles by two significant players who influenced the unfolding of UUA leadership in this arena.

First keynoter **JAY DEACON** recounted his evolution in ministry from Presbyterian to Assembly of God into the Metropolitan Community Church, in the Northeast and Chicago, and then a transfer to UUism in the early 1970s. He served the UU Church in Bangor, ME, just after a beloved gay member was horribly murdered by a gang of high school students in 1984; the local paper declared that he “brought it on himself by his effeminate ways.”

Some years later the same Bangor paper supported gay marriage, a development which, along with the recent election of Laurie Lightfoot as Chicago mayor, prompted Jay to suggest “The earth is indeed moving beneath us.”

He then took a post leading the relatively new UUA Office of Lesbian and Gay Concerns (1986-89), which

offered him the “privilege of sorting through files about early heroes” as he pioneered development of the Welcoming Congregation program. “I believed we could move the center of gravity of debate,” so he assisted UUs who were especially active in Massachusetts (MA) statehouse issues—next door to the UUA, notably.

When Jay went on to serve at the Unitarian Society in Northampton, MA (2002-06), he refused to sign wedding licenses and was interviewed by a local newspaper reporter—Rachel Maddow! Overall he emphasized, “This is about evolution of consciousness and therefore of culture...a push toward greater possibility.” (See his book, *“Magnificent Journey: Religion as Lock on the Past or Engine for Evolution.”*)

Second keynoter **MEG RILEY** (senior minister at the Church of the Larger Fellowship since 2010) expressed gratitude to UURMaPA and to those UUs who came before, noting that “On this issue, we have changed history.” Meg arrived in 1991 as the fifth (but first full-time) director of the UUA Office of

Lesbian and Gay Concerns, humble about her learning curve, but in time to implement the Welcoming Congregation program.

She galvanized around outrageous right wing religious material and advocated with UUA President Bill Shulz that UUs need to get on this, that we “have the right spiritual authority to move the needle.” At the time religion was not the place to be, kind of the enemy for gender minorities, she recognized. The American church generally was oppressive, but she was willing and eager to show a different religious approach.

She was clear that a person-of-faith strategy would approach activism as more than just getting 51% of the vote (a purely political approach); it meant, for instance, looking to help heal rural areas (which were very divided), and it suggested fighting efforts to separate “special rights” from intrinsic rights. Important to her own journey was an early orientation toward what became known as intersectionality.

Meg had many opportunities to show up in visible ways, encouraging other leadership to do so as well, especially as she took on a primary role at the UUA Washington Office. A turning point was when the UUA Board came to Washington, DC, in support of a protest rally for gay rights, and when identified they got a



Tony Larsen comments after keynote talks by Jay Deacon and Meg Riley.



Wayne Arnason and Marlene Walker enjoy a moment; Craig Matheus and Paul “Buzz” Hull, too.

Journey toward LGBTQIA Rights”

standing ovation, which, Meg noticed, resonated visibly thru their bodies. They got it: *This really matters!*

The advocacy for gay marriage had early UUA support, and she described a significant strategy shift from individual prejudice reduction to challenging institutions. She observed that people and congregations that had “done the work” (largely through the Welcoming Congregation program) were much more able to move with gay marriage activism.

She loved that a large banner on the side of the UUA building facing the MA State House declared, “Civil marriage is a civil right,” which got the unhappy attention of the MA Historical Society. They complained to the UUA facilities manager, who responded, “We’d like to take it down but the person in charge of that is on vacation.” At the time, MA Democrats considering inclusive marriage rights met in the UUA chapel for safety. And Beacon Press was a pivotal support!

Ginger Luke, Conference Arranger,
appreciates **Phyllis Hubbell,**
Program Coordinator



Meanwhile, Meg appreciated that on the West Coast in 2004, **LINDI RAMSDEN** and the UU Legislative Ministry of CA began organizing UU engagement on behalf of marriage equality, utilizing the hymn

“Standing on the Side of Love” as a spiritual touchstone for their work. By 2008, they were responsible for coordinating not only UUs, but statewide interfaith organizing. Soon thereafter the UUA launched a more broadly intersectional campaign, now known as “Side With Love,” of which Meg was the founding director.

She noted that “It’s so much about relationships,” even though that can be dicey. For instance, UUs teamed with Mormons on immigration justice, but in doing so tried to avoid

Moderator
Marlene Walker,
center, with



panelists **Kim Crawford-Harvie,**
Tony Larson, Pat Sullivan & Brendan Hadash.

mentioning gay issues, which Meg cited as a profound and regretful mistake. She acknowledged that they were “failing forward” and “redefining success.” All the time.

Follow-up comments after the two keynoters came from **MARK BELLETINI, WAYNE ARNASON, CLAUDIA ELFERDINK, SCOTT ALEXANDER, DIANE MILLER, BARBARA TEN HOVE, PAUL HULL, ELIZABETH STRONG, MARLENE WALKER, GORDON GIBSON, BETH MILLER, NED WIGHT, BARBARA CHILD, and JANE DWINELL.** Among other evocative themes, these testimonials reminded us about the “extraordinary power” of coming out stories. All this was before lunch!

Then the first panel of ministers and partners featured **BRENDAN HADASH, KIM CRAWFORD-HARVIE, TONY LARSON** and **PAT SULLIVAN.** Kim reflected on one angle she tries to manifest during hard times: “Even if (AIDS) takes every one of us and there’s no one left to tell the stories, it matters that we love each other well.” Panel stories and reflections were personal and powerful portrayals of moments and evolutions, sometimes humorous, sometimes sad and/or distressing, all very meaningful.

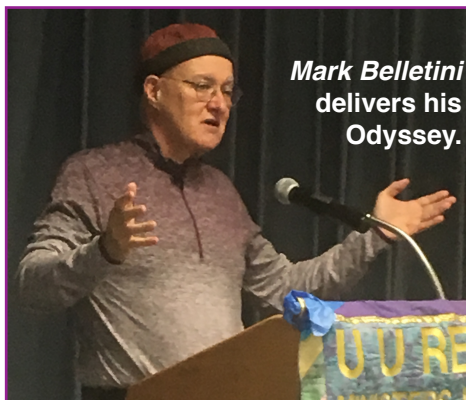
UURMaPA Board members then repeated a program from the February conference: “Remembering LGBTQIA Pioneers,” in which presentations of researched but all-too-short bios honored trailblazers no longer among us. We sadly added *Dorothy Emerson* to this list.

And the evening Odyssey from **MARK BELLETINI**

capped an intensely enriching day. His impassioned portrayal described many good people who have animated and continue to animate his life, illustrated by multiple tables and wall panels of pictures and memorabilia.

*Attitudes don't just change;
they change if we change
them. —James Luther Adams*

Mark Belletini
delivers his
Odyssey.



Fall Conference Report, *cont'd. from Page 9* — “Celebrating the UU Journey toward LGBTQIA Rights”

The next day opened with a moving worship service led by **JANE DWINELL**, followed by a second panel, featuring **LUCY HITCHCOCK**, **CARLTON ELLIOTT SMITH**, **LINDI RAMSDEN** and **CRAIG MATHEUS**, all of whom spoke from their hearts about living in the midst of this evolution. (Lindi “Zoomed” in live from California on screen, largely because she resists increasing her carbon footprint through plane travel. See cover photo.) Multiple testimonials described how UUA staff were more readily supportive than large chunks of congregations. “All those open doors were not as open as they seemed from the outside,” noted Carlton.

Then we had time with **MICHAEL CRUMPLER**, current director of the UUA’s LGBTQ and Multicultural Programs. He emphasized that changing minds changes policy as he explained and promoted the latest edition of the Welcoming Congregations program. We are actively trying to “reframe our gender paradigm,” he declared.

After lunch folks could participate in a variety of optional activities, including an informative session with **KEITH KRON** (former Director of the UUA Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Concerns; current director of the UUA Transitions Office). Private filming of individual stories went on nearby nearly all afternoon, moving the hired videographer (a non-UU hetero male) to tears. “These stories need to be heard,” he affirmed.

Throughout the conference, an emerging Timeline—begun at the previous event in February and well curated by UURMaPA Historian **SUSAN LAMAR**—hung in many sheets on a wall, lifting up key and personal moments during the 50 years since Stonewall. More notes were added as people engaged with this dynamic chronicle. See the results online via the menu at www.uurainbowhistory.net or directly [HERE](#).

The evening offered homegrown entertainment in another “Wide Variety Show” that was heartwarming and great fun, emceed by **BARBARA TEN HOVE**. It ended with a rousing rendition of “The UUs Who Never Adjourned” (a parody written in 1989 by colleagues **KEN READ BROWN** and **ROBBIE WALSH**, sung to the tune of “Charlie on the MTA”).

The final morning had two more group activities, first an update on and discussion of current UURMaPA and UUMA activities, with our President **DIANE MILLER** and UUMA Director of Education **DARRICK JACKSON**, who attended the full conference. He was helpfully engaging and reflected the experience of fellow UUMA staffers **MELISSA CARVILL ZIEMER** and **JANETTE LALLIER** (who both attended the one-day option), when he commented afterward that this week’s experience

“opened my eyes about the Rainbow History Project, and helped me understand the full lifespan of ministry, the need for retired ministers to share their journeys to be part of what we’re doing now.”

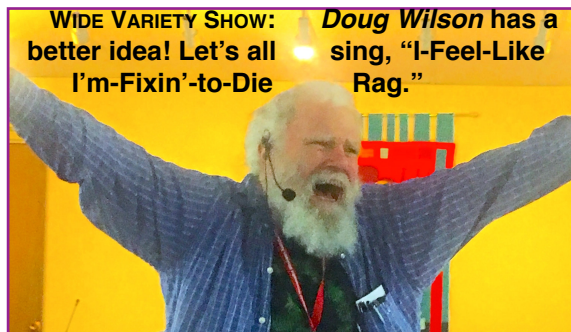
We closed with a worship service led by **MEG RILEY**, who proclaimed, “Our memories here

are so thick! It’s in relationship that we are transformed.” So we then shared moments and people instrumental to us at pivotal times when the axis of our work shifted. She also invited an inner circle community to sing “How Could Anyone” to each other and then

to the outer circle, which brought some to tears.

Throughout the days and hours together, this conference elevated and captivated many of us. We felt honored to both be a part of the event and to be able to honor five decades of struggle and advance, embodied by those who have served among and with us, before and still.

☆☆☆



Closing Worship with **Meg Riley**.
Mark Belletini lights the chalice.



If you learn about the death of a minister or partner, PLEASE let us know at board@uurmapa.org.

Longer versions of all obituaries can eventually be found on the UURMaPA web site (no password needed) at <https://uurmapa.org/obituaries/>.

IN MEMORIAM

Continuing gratitude to **JAY ATKINSON & ROGER ROCHESTER** for their careful researching and writing of ministers and partners obituaries, respectively.

ALFRED J. N. HENRIKSEN (1922 – 2017)

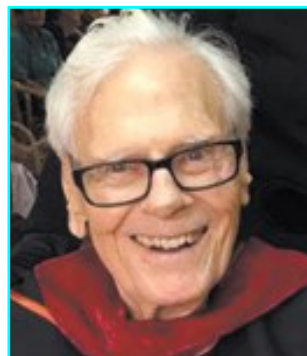
The Reverend Al Henriksen—parish minister, anti-racist activist, lover of dance, jazz, theater, and travel—died on 24 June 2017, aged 95.

Early in his ministry the Rev'd Mr. Henriksen showed himself to be a hands-on pioneer in “walking the talk” of social justice rhetoric. During his ministry in Iowa City in the mid-1950s, Al is remembered for accompanying African-American college students to local barber shops that practiced segregation.

Alfred James Norman Henriksen was born in Boston on 21 January 1922 to James and Anna Syversen Henriksen and grew up in nearby Quincy, MA. He attended Baptist and Lutheran churches as a child but in his teens discovered Quincy's Wollaston Unitarian Church. After a B.A. from Tufts in 1945, he completed his ministerial degree in 1947 at Crane Theological School with a thesis on religious humanism.

In 1946 Mr. Henriksen was called to All Souls Church of Augusta, ME, where he was ordained on 10 October 1946 and served until 1951. He was then settled at the First Unitarian Society of Iowa City, followed by the Unitarian Fellowship of Corpus Christi (TX), and finally at the Pacific Unitarian Church in Rancho Palos Verdes (CA), where he would remain for 24 years. The congregation named its auditorium in his honor and elected him Minister Emeritus in 1987. In retirement, the Rev'd Mr. Henriksen capped his parish career with four interim ministries (1987-91).

Al Henriksen is survived by his second spouse (of 23 years) Georgianne Declercq, three children, six grandchildren, two stepdaughters & their children, and four great-grandchildren. His first spouse, Ruth Baxter Henriksen, died in 1987.



JENNIE PARKER WELLER (1931 – 2019)



Jennie was born 7 August 1931 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Martha Vaughan Parker and Dewitt Henry Parker. She died on 7 September 2018, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, with her children lovingly by her side.

A gifted musician, Jennie graduated from Ann Arbor's University High School in 1948, and received a bachelor's degree in piano performance from the University of Michigan in 1952. She married H. Mark Hildebrandt on 26 August 1950. Jennie chose to forego a musical career to stay home bringing up her five children. She returned to the U. of M. for a master's in social work, graduating in 1973. She was divorced in 1975.

Shortly after her divorce she met Reverend Peter Weller at the Unitarian Church in Ann Arbor. They fell for each other and married on 23 December 1977. In 1979 they moved to Pittsfield, MA, where Jenny practiced social work while Peter was a minister at the UU church. Jenny was “carefully” active in that church, attending the Episcopal church every other week to keep in touch with her Christian needs. She and Pete regularly attended conferences at Ferry Beach in Maine and Star Island in New Hampshire. They also led the sexuality education class at his church.

After their retirement in 1996 they moved to Fort Collins, CO, where he attended the UU Church and she was very active in the Congregational church. Following Pete's death, Jennie moved to Colorado Springs to be close to three generations of offspring.

Jennie was a great mom, always there and always understanding. She developed dementia, and as it progressed she became increasingly frustrated as she lost her mental abilities. She is survived by her children, Marian Ware, Carl Hildebrandt, Janet Hildebrandt, Jay Hildebrandt, and Lisabeth Almgren, and is missed by many friends, as well as stepchildren, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

JOHN B. WOLF (1925 – 2017)

The Reverend Dr. John Wolf—fearless, powerful orator and dominant public spokesman for social justice causes in Tulsa, OK, who guided his congregation to become one of the largest in the UUA and had his own *Wikipedia* entry ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_B._Wolf_\(pastor\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_B._Wolf_(pastor)))—died on 19 September 2017, aged 92.

John Burton Wolf was born on 6 September 1925 in Bloomington, Illinois, to Walter & Helen Young Wolf. He was raised in his mother's Presbyterian church and by his early teens was teaching Sunday School, but got into trouble when he added his own research into the lesson plan he was given to follow. "One of the first cracks in my Calvinism was right then and there."

With a B.D. from Meadville in 1952, Mr. Wolf was called to the Church of the Good Shepherd Universalist (now Olympia Brown Memorial UU Church) in Racine, WI, where he had often preached as a student; he was ordained there on 19 February 1953. His second settlement (1954–60) was Meadville, PA.

The Rev'd John Wolf began his ministry at All Souls in Tulsa, on the first of May, 1960. In his 35 years there, he made an indelible stamp on the life of the city with a public ministry reminiscent of that of A. Powell Davies in Washington, D.C. His sermons were quoted, often extensively, in the Monday newspapers and on television newscasts, and his activism ranged over women's rights, funeral industry reform and, of course, racial justice.

On 13 March 1965, in the midst of the events in Selma, John arranged for his church to host Tulsa's first ever interfaith and interracial worship service, with more than fifty local clergy serving as ushers for the crowd of over 700 crammed into the sanctuary and parish hall. It was followed by a solidarity march of more than a thousand people through the city's downtown. See an interview with him about this (pp. 24-25; search by last name at www.voicesofoklahoma.com).

John had a "contest [with God] going on for [the] better part of sixty years" as he summarized it. He once began a prayer at a UUMA gathering with a drawn-out, and greatly affected southern drawl, "Well..ll, God, here we are again." He recalled that "on one occasion I did call [God] an SOB from the pulpit. Two weeks after that, a tornado came through Tulsa and hit Oral Roberts (University). And I said, 'See? Missed again!'" (More on this in the interview as above, p. 8.)

In 1976 he was named a Doctor of Divinity *honoris causa* by Meadville Lombard Theological School, and on retirement in 1995 All Souls elected him Minister Emeritus. In 2015 he was inducted into Tulsa's Historical Society Hall of Fame.

John Wolf is survived by his spouse of 65 years Barbara N. Hudgins Wolf, son John David Wolf and daughter Catherine Elizabeth Wolf, a grandson, and a great-granddaughter.

IN MEMORIAM



PEGGY C. CLASON (1941 – 2017)

The Reverend Peggy Clason—dedicated religious educator and consultant, parish minister, and volunteer pastoral counselor for residents in her retirement home—died on 29 August 2017, aged 76.

Marguerite Carlson was born on 3 April 1941 in New Britain, Connecticut, to Arvid and Dorothea Walleen Carlson. In 1963 (the year in which she married her beloved spouse Don Clason), she was graduated *summa cum laude* from Upsala College (NJ) with a B.A. in English and Religion. While working initially in the publishing field, Peggy became active in religious education at East Shore UU Church in Mentor, OH. She went on to become the congregation's Director of RE (1972–81) and, while still in that role, began ministerial study at Meadville Lombard Theological School, completing her M.Div. in 1981.

Ms. Clason was ordained on 4 October 1980 by the East Shore church in Mentor and continued there for another eight years as Minister of RE until 1988. She was then called to a parish ministry at the UU Society of Cleveland in Shaker Heights, where she served for seventeen years until retirement in 2005, when she was named Minister Emerita. Beyond local ministry, the Rev'd Ms. Clason continued service as Education Consultant to the UUA's Ohio-Meadville District (1988–91) and as coauthor of the adult RE curriculum, *Consider the Basics* (1992).

She is survived by her spouse of 54 years Don, children Eric Clason and Christine Briede, three grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service took place on 30 September 2017 at East Shore UU Church in Mentor. Memorial donations are encouraged to the UU Society of Cleveland, to East Shore UU Church, and to the Life Care Fund of Ohio Living Breckenridge Village (<https://www.ohioliving.org/foundation/donate>).

IN MEMORIAM

RICHARD LANSING GEER (1933 – 2019)

Richard Lansing Geer, spouse of the Reverend Nan Geer, died 17 April 2019, after a long and productive life. He was born 29 September 1933 in Portland, Oregon, and attended both Willamette University in Salem, OR, and the University of Southern California. After receiving a degree in Mechanical Engineering, Aeronautical Sequence, Richard was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the US Air Force. He subsequently earned a master's degree in Aeronautical Engineering and another in Systems Engineering.

Richard engaged in several significant areas of research. He worked on a Defense Weather Satellite Program which provided improved surveillance of the Soviet Union and was invaluable during the Cuban Missile Crisis. He was an expert in moon dust research before the first moon landing, and worked on some of the first Air Force man-in-space programs. He designed a special gondola to be used in researching high altitude/velocity escape mechanisms, and served as a test subject for evaluating some of the ejection seats. Richard also served on an inspector general team and later as part of the US Air Force Foreign Technology Division. He retired in 1981 as a Lt. Colonel, and came to work for Boeing.

Richard was married to Alice Elizabeth Jackson in 1955. They had two daughters, Marilyn and Elizabeth, but divorced in 1991. In 1992 he married Nan Day, and the two of them subsequently retired to Blaine, WA, where she served the Free Church Unitarian and he was a devoted member.

He was a brilliant man of absolute integrity, great generosity and a wicked sense of humor, dearly loved by many. Richard is survived by his spouse, Nan, his brother and sister-in-law Charles and Lynne Geer, his daughter Marilyn Geer Vancil, her spouse Travis Vancil, Nan's children Rob B., Tim (Jean), Moira (Steve), Heather (Travis), and grandchildren.

Messages of condolence can be sent to Nan Geer, 4704 Sagebrush Lane, Blaine WA 98230.

**GEORGE SCOTT ORFALD (1933 – 2019)**

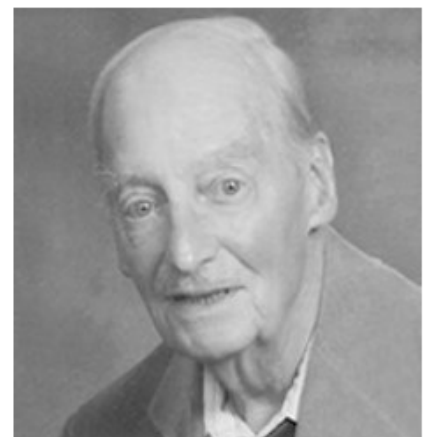
George "Scott" Orfald—spouse of the Reverend Anne Orfald, family man, social worker (child & family services), community volunteer, cottager, lover of classical music and jazz, avid reader, intellectual and humanist—died at the age of 86 on 26 July 2019, at Extendicare Peterborough, Ontario, Canada. He had been adopted as an infant in 1933, by George and Dorothy Orfald of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Always a lover of animals, Scott had pets all his life (dogs & cats), without which life was incomplete. With sadness, those close to him watched in recent years as Scott lost connection with so many things that brought him joy. He was sometimes a challenge in his fierce independence and he held on to his dignity as long as he could. Scott cherished his family and expressed appreciation to his caregivers; we are all better people for having known and loved him.

Grieving the loss and also celebrating a shared love are his spouse, Anne Orfald; children, David (Debby Clarke), Catherine (Steev Morgan), and Susan (Paul Duchene); grandchildren, Jamie (Marissa), Hannah (Jamie), Terra, Rowan, Devin and Walker; great-grandchildren, Fen, Robin and Ellie; sister, Sally (Jim Burns), and extended family and friends in the US and Canada.

"I have always admired your relationship with animals and your caring for nature and the environment. I hope that you see these traits reflected in your family, because I know that they are there" [letter from a grandchild].

Memorial donations that would honour Scott's life could be to: Unitarian Fellowship of Peterborough, ONT; any animal welfare agency; any child and family service; any environmental or peace initiative.



PLAN AHEAD for UURMaPA's 2020 Winter Conference

“A 50-YEAR RETROSPECT OF OUR SOUL”

Use the form (next page) to register today!

By Ginger Luke

One of the evaluations from our most recent gathering suggested, “This conference makes me think that a focus on other social, cultural, and generational changes that affect UUs might also be interesting.” *And that is just what we are offering* for our Winter gathering in Scottsdale, AZ, February 18–21, 2020—a remembering of and reflection on some of the most dynamic changes in ministry that we in UURMaPA have experienced since 1970.

Each of the four general topics below (led by the members listed) will include your memories and responses. The body of this winter conference will be the shared stories of the evolution of our ministries over the last five decades.

- **THE VIETNAM WAR** — how it affected our ministry and personal lives;

Led by **Barbara Child**, author of *Memories of a Vietnam Veteran*, and UURMaPA Board member

The Vietnam War cast a huge shadow over the beginning of the last 50 years, a shadow which for many has still not gone away. We will at least hear from:

- someone who served in the war
- someone who protested against it, and
- someone who lost a beloved to that war.

REQUEST from BARBARA: If you are planning to come to our Winter '20 conference, and could speak to one of these experiences, please email **Barbara Child** soon at revbchild@aol.com.

- **WOMEN IN UU MINISTRY** — how we shaped the evolution of our theology, our spirituality and more;

Led by **Diane Miller**, with 40 years in ministry, current UURMaPA President, past UUA Director of Ministry, and member of the Committee on Women in Ministry

REQUEST from DIANE: I invite women who served as UU ministers during any of the five recent decades to participate in conversations on ZOOM on Tuesdays in Nov., Dec., and Jan., 1 pm (Eastern Time).

Conversations will last up to 90 minutes. Register by email to

president@uurmapa.org.

Reminders and the topic for the week will be sent to you. *Examples of topics are:*

- **THE INTERNET from Snail Mail to Zoom** — how it connected some of us and excluded some of us;

Led by **Duane Fickeisen**, UURMaPA's webmaster

- **RACE** — how we moved and didn't move from Selma to today;

Led by **Gordon Gibson**, author of *Southern Witness*, *Unitarians and Universalists in the Civil Rights Era* and leader of the Living Legacy Project.

- Breaking Stained Glass Ceilings
- Where is Our History? Where to Find Info
- Calls & Careers, Opportunities & Barriers
- Reverend Mothers, Parenting & Ministry
- We're Queer and We're Here
- Retirement & Life Apart from Ministry
- Free to Be You and Me—Feminism
- Invisibility of Women's Concerns
- Sexual Harassment & Sexist Behavior
- Institutional Sexism, Then & Now

Plan to join us in Arizona for camaraderie, a memorable program (including an odyssey), and remembering those we have lost. Plus free time just to be together.

Register soon! (See next page.)



Franciscan Renewal Center
("Casa") — Scottsdale, AZ



**At Franciscan Renewal Center
in Scottsdale, Arizona**

where the average Feb. temperature is
72° in the day and 40° at night.



REGISTER FOR UURMaPA WINTER CONFERENCE
February 18–21, 2020, at Franciscan Renewal Center
5802 East Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85253

***Resident fee (below) covers the program, three nights,
nine meals, social refreshments and general expenses.***

**PLEASE PRINT
CLEARLY**

Name #1: _____ Circle one: Minister Partner
Preferred pronouns: ____He/Him ____She/Her ____They/Them Other _____
Address: _____ City: _____ ST: _____ Zip: _____
Email Address: _____ Phone: _____
Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____ Phone: _____

Name #2: _____ Circle one: Minister Partner
Preferred pronouns: ____He/Him ____She/Her ____They/Them Other _____
Address: _____ City: _____ ST: _____ Zip: _____
Email Address: _____ Phone: _____
Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____ Phone: _____

Because the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale is a new site for UURMaPA, we invite you to look at their website:
www.thecasa.org (The Center offers both single and double occupancy rooms, all with private baths.)

____ If not listed above, I am sharing a bedroom with _____

____ I am willing to share a bedroom with another person at the double occupancy rate

____ Double occupancy at \$350/person \$ _____
____ Single occupancy at \$470 \$ _____
____ Day Commuter at \$50 (flat fee, plus meals as below) \$ _____
Tues. 2/18: ____D/\$16 \$ _____
Wed. 2/19: ____B/\$10.50; ____L/\$13.50; ____D/\$16 = \$ _____
Thurs. 2/20: ____B/\$10.50; ____L/\$13.50; ____D/\$16 = \$ _____
Friday 2/21: ____B/\$10.50; ____L/\$13.50 = \$ _____
Scholarship Contribution \$ _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Accessibility/dietary needs: _____

MAIL registration form and check (made out to UURMaPA) to: **Lois Wesener**, Registrar:
1202 East Kenmore Place, Milwaukee, WI 53211

Her info: **loisw99@hotmail.com** H) 414-963-9590 C) 414-514-2375

Requests for financial assistance should be addressed to: **David Hunter**, **davidhunter2405@comcast.net**
535 Gradyville Road #W-111, Newtown Square, PA 19073 (479-236-1407)



Unitarian Universalist

Retired Ministers and Partners Association

c/o Richard Speck

4721 Mermaid Blvd.

Wilmington, DE 19808-1803

