

## Obituary Editors (Minister or Partner) Job Description

### Rationale:

The UURMaPA Board has determined that honoring and memorializing the deaths of our members is one of several important functions for our membership.

Although ministers in fellowship are honored by the UUA, UURMaPA is the only UU entity that honors the death of partners. UURMaPA has put in place several functions upon the death of our members, involving several Board and off-Board leaders.

Currently on the team, an Obituary Coordinator posts short announcements that are noted by the Editors, as well as charting all activities honoring deceased members, passing along info to appropriate Editors as needed, and keeping files on all member deaths, both ministers and partners.

Two Obituary Editors – one for ministers and one for partners (others may be recruited to assist) - volunteer to compose somewhat detailed obituaries that honor a member's life. These are then shared with the membership and filed in UURMaPA's obituary archive on the website. The Editors are asked to serve in an off-Board position for a year (with option to renew).

### General Information:

The Board has determined that UURMaPA will post only the deaths of our own members (ministers or partners), except that we will report via a brief announcement the death of a minister who was 65 or older, even if not a member (in which case no full obituary will be needed). The Board will then invite the surviving partner, if any, to join UURMaPA.

### First Notice of a death – for follow-up by Editors:

Obituary Editors may receive early information about a member death in several different ways. Each will make note of the info so they can seek and track further details in order to compose a full obituary:

- **Minister death** announcements generally come fairly promptly from the UUA in brief form; these are shared with the membership by the Obituary Coordinator via UURMaPA Announce, so that condolence notes and donations in memory may be sent. **Note:** The Minister Obituary Editor also receives notices and obituaries directly from the UUA and also from UUMA; these provide a basis to edit as desired for UURMaPA.
- **Partner deaths** are harder to discover, as we must rely on members or others to think to tell someone in UURMaPA, who hopefully will then notify the Partner Obit Editor so they can make note for follow-up.
- **The Elderberries** Newsletter regularly posts a request that members notify the Board if they learn of another member's death, and that info is passed along to the appropriate Editor. Facebook and other social media may alert members when a minister colleague or partner dies.

## **Preparation of Obituaries:**

Each Editor's job is to use various contacts and resources to learn more about the life and activities of the member.

- For ministers, the UUA will prepare a longer obit that will be posted, and may be enhanced and edited for UURMaPA's use and archives.
- Funeral homes may prepare obituaries for UURMaPA members that provide good personal information. Local newspaper obit pages and/or congregation newsletters where the minister served may provide more detailed information. Also, invitations to family members and colleagues may provide rich stories and materials (UURMaPA members are regularly invited to contact Editors with these stories).
- Short Death Notices sent on UURMaPA Announce to UURMaPA members (prepared by Obituary Coordinator) may provide basic information (See Appendix for outline). They often provide an Editor some contact info to get research started.

## **Completion of Full Obituaries by the Editors:**

Recent practice has been for both Editors to prepare some full obituaries to submit to the Elderberries Editor for each of the quarterly issues (deadlines January 15, April 15, July 15 and September 15). Edited versions with photos (when available) are published in each issue. A full obituary with photo (no limit on length) is eventually sent to the Webmaster to be added to the UURMaPA Obituary Archive.

*Draft prepared by Judy Gibson, Nominating Committee and former Obituary Coordinator.. Edited by Jay Atkinson, current Minister Obit Editor, May 2020.*

## **Appendix**

Short death announcement guide from UURMaPA – a basic outline

### ***We will miss: NAME (Birth year – Death year)***

*The Board of the UU Retired Ministers and Partners Association offers our condolences to the family and friends of (name), who died on (date) at the age of (age).*

*S/he is survived by (partner, siblings, children, grandchildren, etc.)*

*A memorial service was/will be held on (date) at (time), (location and address if still in future).*

*In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to [\(organization/s\)](#). **In ministerial notices, add the following to the “donations may be made...” section from families:** “UURMaPA will contribute \$50 to the UUMA Endowment Fund ([www.uuma.org/donations/donate.asp?id=11276](http://www.uuma.org/donations/donate.asp?id=11276)) in honor of our colleague's ministry.*

***In partner's notices, add the following to the “donations may be made...” section from families:***

*UURMaPA will contribute \$50 to his/her church or a charity of his/her choice.*

*Notes of condolence can be sent to (name and address).*

*A more complete obituary will be forthcoming after biographical research has been completed. If any readers would wish to contribute information or reminiscences, we would welcome them. Please send them to (choose one)  
UURMaPA's clergy obituary editor, (Name and email).  
UURMaPA's partner obituary editor, (Name and email)*