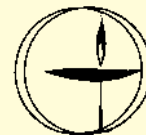


SUNSHINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA DISTRICT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION



Volume 4, Number 1
Autumn, 2000



From the Training & Church Management Committee:
The Florida District UUA Fall Leadership Conference
Presents a Joint Appearance of
UUA President and Moderator Candidates in a Special
UUA Candidates Forum
December 1-2, 2000
First Unitarian Church of Orlando

Don't miss this opportunity (one of six in the continent) to meet and discuss issues with all of the candidates for both president and moderator of the UUA! Mark your calendars now and watch for details forthcoming in your monthly District Packets!

Candidates for president are (pictured above, left to right) the Rev. Diane Miller, Director of the Department of Ministry; the Rev. Lawrence Palmieri Peers, Director of Extension Education and Research for the Department of Congregational, District and Extension Services; and the Rev. William Sinkford, Director of the Department of Congregational, District and Extension Services. Candidates for moderator are Patsy Sherrill Madden of St. Louis, Missouri and Diane Olson of Phoenix, Arizona.

The moderator presides at the General Assembly and at meetings of the board of trustees and represents the Association on special occasions. At the next General Assembly, the UUA will elect a new president and a new moderator. The current President is the Rev. John Buehrens and the current Moderator is Denny Davidoff. The President is the Chief Executive of the Association and is a member ex-officio of all standing committees of the Association. The Moderator is a lay person who presides at General Assembly, at meetings of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee, and represents the Association on special occasions. The moderator is not compensated for services rendered, other than actual expenses. The President receives a salary.

PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS!

Help select our leaders • Help guide the Association and shape our future!
Elections will take place at the 2001 General Assembly in Cleveland, Ohio

Please Note the New Office Hours for the Florida District UUA:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: 1:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. • Wednesday: Office Closed
Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (lunch from 12:30 - 1:00 p.m.)

Inside this Issue

- 1 Candidates Forum
- 1 District Office Hours
- 2 District Executive: Cycles
- 2 Election Advisory
- 3 President's Column
- 3 From Your Trustee
- 3 R.E. for Small and Medium Churches
- 4 Snapshots: District Assembly & General Assembly
- 5 District Annual Awards
- 6 Spirit of Life's New Home
- 6 50th Ordination Celebration
- 6 President's Council Meeting Scheduled
- 7 Extension Ministry
- 7 Campus & Young Adult Sunday
- 7 Young Adult Con
- 7 Rafting Rules Apply
- 8 Florida Leadership School
- 8 Chalice Lighter Award
- 8 Funding Our Faith
- 9 West Central Cluster
- 9 Fall Women & Religion Retreat
- 9 Bill Ranck: Liberalism
- 10 Women's History & Black History Events
- 10 Women & Religion Convener
- 10 Hemlock Society publishes UU article
- 10 SWIM: Circle of Life
- 11 UU Women of History
- 11 Northeast Cluster Picnic
- 12 District Calendar



Mary's Musings

I have had a most amazing summer that began with sadness at losing my fathers' sister, Ann to colon cancer. His profound sadness was hard to witness. The cycle of life goes on. At the same time as my Aunt was letting go, my daughter, Caroline and her husband, Greg were preparing to bring my first grandchild, Sydney Adair Pelley, into the world. Of course, they might have described the event differently, for I do not believe THEIR intent was to give ME a grandchild, but it points up just how relative everything is in our universe. The cycle of life goes on. I spent a week in upstate

New York looking for land on which to build my retirement home in a dozen or so years. The cycle of life goes on. A violent storm uprooted a hundred year old oak tree and crashed it through the roof and ceiling of my daughters house last weekend. All the people were un-hurt but the house is crushed in the back. The cycle of life goes on.

Our lives give us so much richness and sadness; so much beauty and confusion; so many choices and so much presented to us as if the issue was already settled. We cannot order our days as much as we may want to be "in control." We can seek to find ways to respond to our lives that keep us feeling centered, but the ability to control the outcome of our days is not ours.

There are cycles in the lives of our congregations as well. At the very time that a congregational president feels lucky to have such an easy year, the minister resigns. At the moment when your building finally seems "just right," a hurricane threatens. At the moment when you think that the relationships in your congregation could not get any worse, someone comes forward and breathes a calmness into your common life and all good things become possible

again. Without preplanning, a word is spoken that heals the wounded heart and soothes the grieving partner. With great intention we create an environment that helps our children feel safe in a world that is portrayed as hostile. We do our work together through all the cycles. And life goes on.


No stage endures unless we hold onto the past as the only vision we have for the future. When I am most sure of this, I am not overcome by anxiety. I can find my center even when I am not in control. This is my wish for you this year: I wish you to look deep inside you and find ways to let go of visions that serve the past, not the future. I hope your congregation will risk letting the larger world know we exist. I wish for you a deepening of your religious community that looks for ways to open yourselves the joys of diversity, not the threat. I hope that each of you will find ways to remember the shared values that hold us together when you find yourself angry at another. I hope that civility and compassion will be the watchwords that guide you in the year ahead. And remember, the cycle of life will go on, and on.

— THE REVEREND MARY CHULAK HIGGINS
DISTRICT EXECUTIVE



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1901 E. Robinson Street, Suite 18
Orlando, Florida 32803
Phone: (407) 894-2119
Fax: (407) 894-9564
E-mail: UUAFLDIST@aol.com
<http://www.cyberstreet.com/uufld/>
Rev. Mary Chulak Higgins,
District Executive

Submissions may be sent to:
Linda Mowers, Sunshine Editor
2043 Pompano Parkway
Orange Park, FL 32073
Phone (904) 272-3862
Fax (904) 298-3653
E-mail: mowers@snapjax.com



**ELECTION YEAR
ADVISORY**

Internal Revenue Service Issues Warning Against Churches in Politics

Washington (AP) — An election-year advisory from the Internal Revenue Service warns tax-exempt churches and other charities that tax policy forbids campaign activity.

The IRS said groups that are exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the tax code are "prohibited from participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office."

Banned activities include endorsements, donations, fund-raising and even programs that are "nonpartisan and in the public interest" but help or hurt a candidate, the IRS stated. Educational forums that do not take sides are allowed. Violators could be taxed on non-exempt activity or lose tax exemption entirely.

The IRS issued similar warnings during the 1992 and 1996 campaigns.

In May, a federal appeals court ruled that the IRS was justified in removing tax exemption from the Church at Pierce Creek in Binghamton, N.Y., for running 1992 campaign ads attacking Bill Clinton.



Some Ramblings

You wouldn't believe the difficulty I have in writing this column each quarter. I get writer's block and agonize. It's a good thing I didn't become a journalist, or a minister for that matter.

As you read this I will be almost halfway through my fourth and final year as President of the Florida District. Additionally, this year I am Vice President - Finance of the Fort Myers church and serve on two very active ad hoc committees. I have had leadership roles in all three churches and two fellowships of which I have been a member over the last 39 years.

Why on earth do I do it?

The primary reason is because Unitarian Universalism is something I really believe in. But, I must confess, perhaps equally important is the fact that I get so much out of it.

How do I get so much out of it?

I give a lot of my time and to a lesser extent my limited financial resources. Giving to a cause I believe in is healthy

and nourishing for me and it makes me feel good.

Some happenings give me a sense of pride and self worth (e.g.- the role I played in putting on a building addition to the Unitarian Universalist Society: East in Manchester, CT, or at General Assembly in Salt Lake City being greeted with "Ed Porteus, I was hoping I would see you" by a newly fellowshipped, 40 year old minister, who knew me in the mid-fifties as her third grade, church school teacher at the North Hills U. U. Church in Pittsburgh).

There is nothing that moves me more than to see a group of well informed UUs working the democratic process the way it should be worked - listening deeply; speaking when and only when they have something to say; being respectful yet passionate; and seeking the solution and action that is best for the community. And if I feel that I have contributed to making that happen, I am doubly rewarded.

I have grown and learned so much from these experiences.

Finally, and perhaps most important, I have been highly privileged to work closely with some of the finest people I have ever known. I can't say enough about them.

Why and how do you serve? Do you get as much out of it as I have? My experience supports the old saw that you have to give in order to receive. I have received far more than I have given. Do you want to receive more from your church membership? Could you be doing more? Think about it!

Thanks for listening.

— ED PORTEUS, PRESIDENT

From Your Trustee:

Fall (Florida style) is in the air, with school starting and cooler air at my usual morning walk time. I'm delighted to serve you as Trustee for this coming year, but at times I find my mind wandering to what's next—for you and for me—when the year is over.



As Trustee, I find my work very rewarding, mostly because I have the opportunity to hear about issues facing congregational and district leaders and to help develop Association policy to guide our Administration in response. It really works that way. The new settlement system for ministers has resulted from concerns expressed by ministers and lay leaders in this district about the system the Association had been using forever. An increasing emphasis on the visibility of Unitarian Universalism in our broader culture is directly related to the comments made by leadership here and across the continent. New building programs for our congregations are sprouting up in response to needs. A clear commitment to supporting our youth and young adults by the Board has led to major initiatives in program development and funding. The list goes on and on, and that is because we all care about the future of this movement and work together for progress.

An important transition for me will be retiring as a UUA Trustee next June at General Assembly. It is also an important transition for you, and I urge you to pay particular attention to the qualifications of those who decide to run for this position. Your congregation's future is inextricably tied to the future of other congregations in this web we call an association, and your active participation in this democratic change in leadership is a renewal of your commitment to our faith.

As always, I welcome your comments.

— MARGARET SANDERS, UUA TRUSTEE



Northeast Cluster of the Florida District presents
Religious Education
for Small and Medium Sized Churches
Saturday, September 23, 2000 • 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
at Community UU Church, 1124-F Beville Road, Daytona Beach, FL

Featuring Connie Goodbread and Karen Gonzalez,
past Florida District Chairpersons
for LifeSpan Religious Education

Registration Forms available in your August District Packet,
or phone Larry Rayner at 321-752-4150 for details.

Snapshots: Florida District Annual Assembly 2000 *“Building a Home for Every Unitarian Universalist”*



Keynote speaker, The Reverend Stefan Jonasson from Winnipeg, explored the age-old struggle with theological diversity in Unitarian Universalism. His wit and wisdom was well-received by Annual Assembly attendees.



Participating in the Florida District “Coming of Age” Celebration were (front, left to right) Duncan Warner from Ormond Beach, Laura Hadden from Miami, and Kevin Bennett from Miami. In back (left to right) are Kris Komondorea from Ft Myers and Sarasota, Kit Hamblen from Gainesville, Natalie Lloyd from Tampa, and Caspian Baskin from Miami



Newly elected Board Members: (Back, left to right) The Rev. Carole Yorke, Julie Smith Dary. (Front, left to right) The Rev. Ken Beldon, John Asgeirson, Kathy Converse, Jim Luce.

The Florida District Annual Assembly was held April 28-30, 2000 at the Langford Resort Hotel in Winter, Park, Florida. Delegates and other attendees enjoyed a full agenda that included the business meeting, bridging ceremony and worship service, banquet and fes-

ivities, top-notch speakers, entertainment, UU bookstore and displays, and a great selection of workshops—all in one location! Hats off to all who worked hard to make the Assembly a success, and to all Florida District UU’s who participated in our greater UU community!

Snapshots: General Assembly 2000, Nashville, TN • Florida In-Gathering



Florida UU’s gather together at General Assembly in Nashville this past June, before the Opening Ceremony and Banner Parade. Over 150 Florida District UU’s were present at G.A.



Florida District Unitarian Universalist Annual Awards – 2000

There were more entries this year than in days of yore, and that indicates a broad spectrum of many truly fine UU efforts throughout our District. **Maurea Slesman**, Awards Chair, thanks all entrants and judges, and looks forward to even more next year; virtue is its own reward, of course, but it's worthwhile to applaud each other, and to learn from shared ideas and results.

Special this year are two posthumous awards, and a re-categorizing in the 'newsletters' slots: awards will henceforth be given for LARGE, Medium, Small, and also non-hi-tech, making four newsletter awards. That's because all of the newsletters are splendid, and there are so many entrants!

NEWSLETTERS—judged on such points as content, readability, layout, computerese, overall "looks," graphics, calendar, and committee "reports," new member profiles, milestones, mailability, etc.

Non-hi-tech newsletter award—*"News of the UU's"*—UU Church of the Treasure Coast, Stuart, Editor—**Suzan Kaehler**

Small size congregation newsletter—*"UNI-VERSE"* UU Fellowship of Marion County, Ocala—Editor **Joyce Mills**

Medium size congregation—*"The New Outlook"*—UU Fellowship of Charlotte County, Editor **Bob Norton**

Large size congregation—*"Naples UU News"*—UU Congregation of Greater Naples, Editor **Sandy Keeler**

Unsung Unitarian Universalist—UU Fellowship of Charlotte County, **Dr. Bill Wharton**, Past president, active in many committees and boards over the years, countless small jobs behind the scenes, tirelessly and quietly, from sound man to janitor, repairs, phone system, furniture mover, you name it, always....

Lifetime Achievement Award—UU Fellowship of Bay County, Panama City – **Nancy Roberts**. Nancy taught RE for children, formed adult RE too, served on Thomas Jefferson UU District Board, Chalice Lighter promoter, All Member Canvass Chair, past church president, VP, active in the UU Human Rights Council esp in early school integration programs, newsletter editor and mailer, church phone inquiries & answering machine, active in many other commit-

tees and volunteer work, since the 1950s and ongoing!

Special Lifetime Achievement Award—**Nancy Campbell** (posthumous), most recently of Lecanto/Nature Coast UUs, died this January. A lifelong UU, born in Massachusetts, Nancy really lived her Unitarian Universalist principles. She was a firm patriot, yet critical of social policies, and an activist for change. Nancy believed in the political potential of women, and was a lifelong worker for, and promoter of the League of Women Voters, and was exemplary for her volunteerism and teamwork assertiveness, UU and all ways, always. She was also a great musical mom and choir singer and its cheerleader.

Jim Barrett Social Justice Award—(presented by Steven Jens-Rochow, Social Justice/UUSC co-chair) **Nancy Bass**, Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee. Among other efforts, Ms. Bass was key as church president in 1994 in establishing their Racial & Cultural Diversity Committee, and since then the group has organized wide study circles, rebuilt burned churches, led interfaith worship services, and currently, they support 27 families in the area with various outings, counseling services, and interaction and discussion groups, ongoing. Also, a December potluck is held which honors all winter holidays, with people, foods and events from many cultures. What a good outreach idea!

Excellence in Religious Education Award—**Madalyn Rankin**, Unitarian Universalist Church of Ft. Myers. Ms. Rankin has been an RE *volunteer extraordinaire* for over fifteen years, teaching preschool classes almost every Sunday, foregoing her being with adults in the main service!!! During summers, she works with children of all ages. Every year she plots such fare as Watermelon Sunday, Bubble Sunday, and "everyone's favorite, Ice Cream Sunday!" Madalyn especially emphasizes teaching children proper behavior and self-control. (And she must be saintly to be so generous with her time!)

John DeWolf Hurt Levity Award- (presented by Mary Louise DeWolf) **Sarasota**

claims ha-has this year, as Mary explains. "Sarasota held a canvass event, 'uuREuu 2000,' directed by Esther Martin, an all-ages canvass kickoff, with choir, band, dancers, a UU creed, and audience participation. The entry included its playbill, pictures, a script, and a video." (Wow!)

Special Posthumous Award—**Blue Lunden (1936-1999)**, **UU Fellowship of Key West**. This outstanding woman truly deserves both the Lifetime Achievement Award AND the Jim Barrett Social Justice Award. A quote from the entry letter: "Her life was a tribute to the causes of justice, fairness, non-violence and sexual discrimination." Sampling: began speaking at Gay AA meetings in 1972, very involved in The Peace Movement (70's), arrested for civil disobedience at UN Session on Disarmament, formed DON'T (Dykes Opposed to Nuclear Technology), and took active part in major demonstrations such as Womens Pentagon Action 81, Women's March ('83/NY). A video was done of her life by 'Women Make Movies' in '98, title 'Some Ground to Stand On.'(contact Key West Fellowship for loan: would make a good Sun. program)

Clarence R. Skinner Award—for an outstanding sermon exemplifying UU principles. "*A New Religion*," by **Mitchell Modisett**, Unitarian Universalist Church of St. Petersburg. This sermon reminds us that UU has no creed, and that we are all pilgrims on a lifetime religious and philosophical journey. (Judges notes: "And now, the Grand Prize, the essay that I gave an A+, not just because I agreed with every word, but because it embodies the elements of good writing – organization, clarity, unity, coherence- and also has the elements of good speaking- logical thinking, humor, good research, provocative assertions, memorable stories from today's news, and just two simple, clear thoughts: ring out the old and ring in the new." All of the entries are very good, and notes were written about each, to be given to the entrants. Congrats!

Outstanding website: We hope to have more of us up and running soon. Mean-
(continued on page 6)

ANNUAL AWARDS

(continued from page 5)

while, this year's winner is informative, and updated, and imaginative par excellence! <http://www.uuf.org> (Gainesville)

Women and Religion Honors—*The Olympia Brown Honor*, named for the first woman to be ordained by a denomination in June 1863, is being given this year to women standing in UU pulpits across Florida, the carriers of the Olympia Brown flame, by Florida District Unitarian Universalist Women & Religion. Bravo, Ladies! **Rev. Mary Higgins**, our District Director, serves as a UU minister to us all, so we awarded hers first, followed by: **Rev. Harris Riordan**, UU Fellowship of Boca Raton; **Rev. Linnea Pearson**, Eastside Unitarian church, Miami; **Rev. Gail Tapscott**, UU Church of Ft. Lauderdale; **Rev. Marni Harmony**, First Unitarian Church of Orlando; **Rev. Kristen Harper**, UU Society of Daytona Beach area/Ormond Beach; **Rev. Amy McKenzie Quinn**, UU Church of Tallahassee; **Rev. Judith Morris**, UU Congregation of Greater Naples; **Rev. Dee Graham**, UU Church of St. Petersburg; **Rev. Barbara Child**, UU Church of Tampa; **Rev. Susanne Nazian**, interim, UU Fellowship of Charlotte County, Port Charlotte; **Rev. Carol Yorke**, Spirit of Life Unitarian Universalists, Oldsmar; **Rev. Danielle Greene**, Sarasota; and **Rev. Lansing Moran**.

— MAUREA SLEESMAN, AWARDS CHAIR

Congregational Presidents' Council Meeting at the Fall Leadership Conference

The Congregational President Council will gather briefly on Friday Evening December 1, 2000 at 7:00 PM. This will be a time to renew friendships, strengthen mutual support and help to develop an agenda for the Candidate Forum on Saturday. Plan to attend. Email Bud Murphy at vntgpoint@aol.com or call Bud Murphy at (904) 519-5729 so we can plan meeting space and refreshments. We will provide more details by letter later.

— BUD MURPHY
PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL CHAIR



Spirit of Life Unitarian Universalists Open New Home!

With a great feeling of excitement, members, friends, and visitors gathered under a canopy of trees to celebrate the first worship service at the new home of Spirit of Life Unitarian Universalists at 9 a.m. on Sunday, June 4, 2000. Members representing various groups from within this diverse congregation joined with the President, Joe Velazquez; Minister, Rev. Carole Yorke; and Director of Religious Education, Connie Goodbread to cut the ribbon to open the service. This setting also provided a beautiful backdrop for the annual Flower Communion.

The new home of Spirit of Life Unitarian Universalists is located at 18412 Burrell Road in Odessa, Florida. The property is just north of Keystone/Tarpon Springs Road in northwestern Hillsborough County. The site includes a house of approximately 3,000 square feet that is being used to provide office, meeting, social hour, and religious education classroom space.

The congregation's first priority is the construction of a covered pavilion to serve as a temporary sanctuary. Until this construction is completed, Sunday services will continue under the trees. A second priority is to provide additional classroom space for the Children's Religious Education program that has an enrollment of over 60 children.

Spirit of Life Unitarian Universalists invites all to visit and join us for worship services at 9 a.m. on Sunday mornings. For more information see our web site at: <http://members.aol.com/spirituu> or call (813) 792-1622.

— RICK HALLMARK, NEWSLETTER EDITOR, SPIRIT OF LIFE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

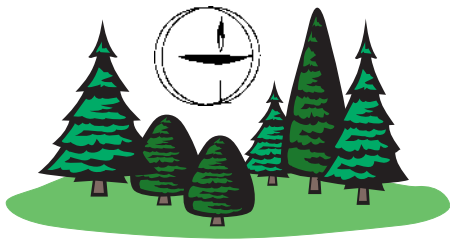
Miami Minister Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Ordination

The Rev. Dr. Ward A. Knights, Jr., minister emeritus of the First Unitarian Church of Miami is celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the ministry. He was ordained in 1950 by the American Evangelical Christian Churches while serving the Community Church of Pownal Center, Vermont. He subsequently held ordination as a Congregational minister before becoming a Unitarian Universalist in 1970.

His education took him to John Brown University, Hartford Theological Seminary, Harvard, Boston University, Oberlin, and Western Reserve University. He earned a doctorate in pastoral theology and counseling from Vanderbilt University.

He has served churches in several states including Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, as well as in Florida. He also served as a Chaplain in the United States Army, retiring after 24 years of service. Much of his ministerial career was spent as a hospital chaplain and as a Supervisor of Clinical Pastoral Education.

Since retiring from the First Unitarian Church in Miami in 1993 he has continued to serve as a Supervisor of Clinical Pastoral Education at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami and is on the adjunct faculty of the South Florida Center for Theological Studies.



Growth/Extension

The Florida District Extension Committee has traditionally been responsible for supporting new congregations and encouraging growth among existing congregations. In addition, it coordinates our Campus Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, and Chalice Lighters. As the new Chair, I hope we can look at the Ends of the Florida District and play a major role in fulfilling them.

When we meet in September, I hope we can think about strategic direction first. One End is to grow in total membership and in number of congregations. But we must also work to be a creative and prudent steward of financial and human resources. I'll be asking the committee to help us find a balance in these Ends.

I'm brand new as a committee chair, so I'm trying to keep an open mind and ask a lot of questions. It seems to me however, that our traditional activities in support of growth have had little impact. Looking at the relatively stable membership numbers, how can we best encourage growth in our congregations? How can we account for ministry to UUs who may be outside of formal congregations? How can we best support our new congregations? Perhaps we'll ask about experiences in other districts, or look at individual congregations that have been successful. It may be that we have to inspire the members of our congregations before any growth plan can move forward.

Whatever we decide, it is quite exciting to be part of the leadership as Florida District adopts the Carver philosophy. This committee has clear ends to guide our priorities and plenty of resources to work with. The energy in this district is high, and we've got an excellent District Executive to guide our work. I'll provide regular columns outlining our progress.

—JIM MOIR

Participate in the Florida District Subcommittee on Campus Ministry & Young Adults' CAMPUS AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY SUNDAY

October 1, 2000

As big or as small as you wish it to be in your congregation...this special day is earmarked to focus on the needs of students and young adults (18-35). It will be a time to inform people of programs around the district for students and young adults, and to gather information about young adults and graduated seniors in your area. Speakers are available for presentations, or information with presentation resources are available by contacting Kim Ross Frichter, Co-chair, Campus Ministry and Young Adults: 850-562-7378 or kross@rice.hep.fsu.edu

University Unitarian Universalists of FSU Cordially invite you to

The "Get-Away" Con

A Young Adult Conference

Held on October 20 - 22, 2000

For all 18 - 35 year olds (not age exclusive) who want to release tension and relieve stress, this con is for YOU!

Come relax, and enjoy
Touch Groups, Worship, and Good Food!

Workshops include:

Tai-chi and Meditation

Creating Poetry

Computer-bashing, plate-smashing and mosaic building

Massage, and more...

Location: Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee

Registration Fee: \$25 (Limited Scholarships available for travel/registration)

See your District Packet for registration forms and flyers.

For more information on this or future Young Adult activities or to express an interest in attendance, scholarships, childcare, or ride-sharing, contact:

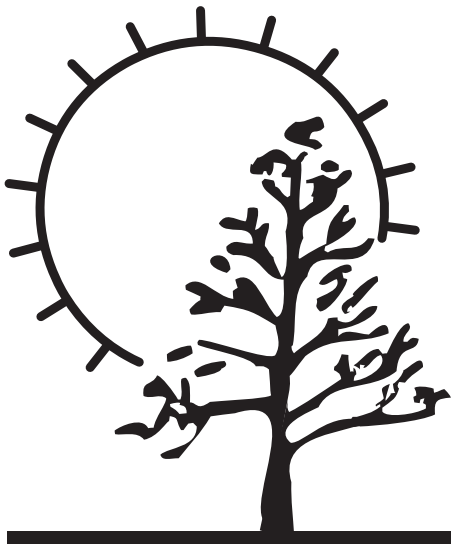
thetawaycon@email.com, see www.afn.org/~afn49740/con.html

Or call Kim Ross Frichter at 800-495-9655 or 850-562-7378

"Rules for White Water Rafting and Congregational Life"

1. It's what you came for. Enjoy it.
2. Rest in the calm places. There will be more white water soon.
3. Never stop paddling, even when it seems hopeless.
4. When you're in trouble, don't panic.
5. If you go under, let go. You'll come back up.
6. Don't be surprised if the raft doesn't go where you want it to go.
7. Everyone paddles furiously, but it's still the current that takes you.
8. The more activity on the right, the more the raft goes left, and vice versa.
9. Decide who is going to steer, the person in the bow or the person in the stern.
10. Balance, balance, balance.

— PATRICK O'NEILL



FLORIDA LEADERSHIP SCHOOL 2000

NOVEMBER 5 – 11, 2000
Canterbury Retreat Center
Oveido, FL

- FLS is in its third year of re-establishment and seeks full partnership with each and every Florida District congregation.
- Help your leaders clear their busy lives to attend this strong and irreplaceable foundation in congregational lay leadership that is the practical experience in church management and the individual sense of empowerment.
- Building a legacy of Leadership graduates in your congregation creates a permanent investment in quality stewardship with countless measurable returns.

The Florida Leadership School Committee hopes to see you represented at FLS 2000!

Contact the District office right away for registration details:
uuafldist@aol.com or (407) 894-2119

This is a golden opportunity for every Florida congregation!



Spring Chalice Lighter Call Produced Exceptional Results!

In May, **Chalice Lighter** chair **Jim Emerson** (*above, right*) delivered a bundle of checks totalling over \$5,100 dollars to Buckman Bridge UU Society. The Chalice Lighter grant was in support of the congregation's first call to professional ministry. The Reverend **John Rex** (*above, left*) accepted the donations on behalf of the congregation. Buckman Bridge expressed many thanks to Chalice Lighters throughout the Florida District for their generosity. Jim's next delivery will be to the UU Congregation of Venice in September. *Keep the spark alive and answer the Chalice Lighter's call to support the greater UU movement!*

FUNDING OUR FAITH: Annual Program Fund

What can I say? You are the most fantastic District! We have surpassed predictions and were 98% fair share for the 1999-2000 fiscal year in our contributions to the UUA Annual Program Fund. Not only that but 90% of our congregations were fair share. The Unitarian Universalist Association thanks you! The Florida District thanks you! And I thank you for making my responsibilities so rewarding and positive! Much appreciation to all you wonderful UUs in: **Boca Raton, Manatee, Brooksville, Clearwater, Cocoa, Daytona Beach, Deland, Dunedin, Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, Gainesville, Howey-In-the-Hills, Jacksonville, Key West, Lakeland, Lecanto, Miami First, Naples, North Palm Beach, Ocala, Orange Park, Orlando First, Orlando University, Ormond Beach, Panama City, Port Charlotte, Rockledge, Sarasota, St. Augustine, St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg United, Stuart, Sunrise, Tallahassee, Tampa, Tarpon Springs, Venice, Vero Beach and Valdosta.**

What does this mean for the District? You guessed it, additional monetary resources for our work in the District. In fact it means \$5,000 more than what our basic grant would be. A special thanks to Rev. Mary Higgins and Ed Porteus for their tireless devotion to their work in the District. I truly believe that Mary and Ed are a primary force in our success, of course along with everyone who does so much for our District.

It will be a busy year for me in my role as Florida APF Chair and as newly appointed regional chair for the UUA Annual Program Fund. But hopefully I will never be too burdened to respond to your APF needs. Please contact me if I can be of service to your congregation. Enjoy a blessed fall season.

— JOAN LUND, FLORIDA DISTRICT CHAIR, ANNUAL PROGRAM FUND
813-931-9727/JBLUND@AOL.COM

West Central Cluster Review

There were three West Central Cluster events this past year, starting with attending the SW Cluster workshops, held in autumn, at the Ft. Myers UU Church, spearheaded by **Dr. Frank Dunn**, the SWC president. Workshops focused on canvassing, religious education programs, and fund raising ideas. It was well attended, although mostly by UUs from the SW areas; it's a swell idea to combine attendance however, so that more of us meet and exchange thoughts and concerns.

In February, the WCC held a program at the UUs of Clearwater, featuring MUSIC. The morning sessions included using various music on Sundays, building better 'sound systems', and building a choir. **Rev. Richard Speck**, of Vero Beach, accompanied by Lakeland's **Anne Wiseland**, led the all souls' session on *Using Your UU Hymnal*, a smaller version of the hit show the east side Clusters staged a few months earlier. Rev. Speck awakens folks to better UUism wherever he appears with his talents and thoughtfulness. After a catered lunch, seven local UU societies offered a sampling of their musical talents, and Clearwater's sound wiz **Norm Peterson** made a CD, so that interested folks could buy a memento. (A few are still available if y'all want to listen to such fare as: Bradenton's children's AND adult choir, Clearwater's maestro pianist **Graime Constantine** (a 17-yr-old prodigy) playing Dvorak with his father, Graime and **Ms. Debbie Langrock** the flutist bedazzling with some Bach, a quintet performing Ezekiel Saw the

Wheel, Spirit of Life's adult & children's choir, and a new harmonious choir from Nature Coast UU's, among many others. Even a Pines Irish tenor, so ladies might swoon. **JoAnn Hettel** sang 'Memories' as splendidly as Ms. Brightman. Ya shoulda been there!

May 6th was the WCC annual meeting, at Tarpon Springs, the theme being 'Welcoming Cultural Diversity.' **Dr. Adele McCollum** of Brooksville's Pines discussed Islam and Americans' misunderstandings of it. Dr. McCollum is a retired teacher of Religion, and her Doctorate is in Theology. **Lalitha Janamanchi** of India and two Sri Lankans UU friends **Wana** and **Shanti Paranawithana**, all of the UUs of Clearwater, masterminded the hands-on cooking workshop, and attendees gorged on the gourmet exotica. After lunch, **Rev. Wes Stevens** introduced Clearwater's **Rev Abhi Janamanchi**, who spoke about being raised in India, and making the vast transitions to where he and his family are now. Oh *definitely*, ya shoulda been there!

New officers: **Don Micklewright**/Lakeland - president, **Jeff Harper**/UU St. Petersburg - VP, **Maurea Sleesman**/Pines - sec., and **Margaret Evans**/UU St. Petersburg - treas. We hope more UUs will get enthused about their local, regional Cluster programs, and we hope to combine more efforts with the District and other events; the more we share, the more we learn, with enjoyment of our chosen faith!

— MAUREA SLEESMAN
CLUSTER/DISTRICT ENTHUSIAST

Wise Words from Bill Ranck...

(Note: Bill Ranck was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Florida District UUA in 1999.)

Liberalism and UUism are too important to allow the extremists to destroy us.

It took the Greeks to bring Liberalism to fruition out of the small liberal threads that have existed through the ages. Liberalism was killed for over 2 millennia after the Greeks only to really come back to life again in the American Declaration of Independence.

President Lincoln echoed the importance of liberalism in his Gettysburg Address—"by and for the people."

My Merriam-Webster version 5 says, "A Liberal is: generous in a noble way." I interpret it to mean: "Help not to Hurt."

It is so easy NOT to be liberal—too many jobs require you not to be. This has even spilled into UUism—I see one person committees; chair persons starting off by saying to committee members over the phone, "I've decided this; do you agree?" I've found Liberalism does work, while at first it takes a little more time, I've found it pays off big whether at church or work.

(Let's talk together about) what we can do to spread this precious commodity around. And how we can make it stronger before it is overwhelmed again for another eternity.

We, and the people of America, need to get more control of (our) individual lives rather than allow some "belief" dictate how our lives should be. We are in an age of a rapidly growing tidal wave of laws, regulations and fees to buy unequal justice that the most law-abiding citizen can't keep up with let alone comply with. Discriminate application of law brought in the days of blind-siding justice for only those who can afford it, even when innocent.

What can you and we do?

— BILL RANCK, MELBOURNE, FL



FALL WOMEN & RELIGION RETREAT

October 20-22, 2000 • UU in the Pines, Brooksville
"Celebrating Life's Passages: Walking our Path."

Come for a fall weekend of soul searching, sole searching, sisterhood and fun. What has been your path and where are you going? Young girl goddess-ettes, maidens, mothers, midlifers and crones are invited to come and bring shoes—ballet shoes, birthing shoes, funky flip flops, baby slippers, hiking boots, dancing slippers, the shoes that have supported you on your path(s). We will honor where we have been, where we are, and where we are going in creativity, laughter and song. All women and children welcome. First-timers will be especially welcomed by soul/sole sisters! Information and Registration: Contact Suzanne Gagan: 352-796-4457.



Women's History and Black History Celebrations

On Saturday, March 4th, at 1:00 p.m., in the **Unitarian Universalist Church of Miami** sanctuary, **Janette Moody Allen**, professionally acclaimed opera singer (four working octaves coloratura) gave a stunning performance of UU **Ellie Stein's** play, "*Harriet Tubman On The Underground Railroad*," depicting the story of how this remarkable woman spirited 300 slaves to the North and freedom at great risk to herself.

The Alliance in collaboration with the University of Miami Women's Study Program, and the **Southeast Cluster**, made this presentation possible. Included in the audience were many people from the larger community.

Another large happening here in Miami was the University of Miami's Department of Theatre Arts and College of Arts and Sciences production, at the Ring Theatre of **Wendy Wasserstein's** play, "*Uncommon Women and Others*." The Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright was present to participate with faculty members on a panel discussion post-play, with input from the audience!

It was incredible to see how this 1978 play, winning a Pulitzer Prize in 1989, is still relevant to women today. Wendy and the faculty panelists were able to give a wonderful historic perspective to the exploration of women's rights, feminism, and feminist political issues through their personal sharing. Each panelist presented a different perspective in keeping with the diversity in age and the stages of their own life journey.

Also part of the University of Miami's

Women's History Month there was a presentation by **Kate Millet**, author of *Sexual Politics*, who spoke on "*New Definition of Women's Rights*," as well as a presentation by **Joyann McCall Gongaware** on "*Contributions of Women in History: The Example of Mary Baker Eddy*."

So there is a lot of Women's History action in the Florida District. St. Petersburg had the gifted **Dr. Sally Roesch Wagner** doing four days of *Matilda Joslyn Gage*, the third feminist with Susan B. Anthony and Elisabeth Cady Stanton. Gage was a woman who was so radical she was unrecorded in the movement by her own courageous sisters. Dr. Wagner also beautifully presented the little known influence of the Iroquois women who were an inspiration to the women in Seneca Falls. Dr. Wagner appeared on Ken Burn's TV docudrama "*Not For Ourselves Alone*." The story of Anthony and Stanton, and write the study guide.

Also, **Margot Adler** is in the UU Church of Boca Raton. Therefore, many truly uncommon women have been running up and down Florida roads to take in all of the above. Again, I am very pleased, indeed, because we have worked very hard as outrageous activists to get all this action in the Florida District. A proper celebration of women and their incredible almost unknown history – the best ever to date.

BLESSED BE AND BRAVO,
LUCY SWENSON-KNIGHTS

FLORIDA DISTRICT WOMEN & RELIGION

New Women & Religion Co-Convener

Lucy Swenson-Knights of the Miami Church will be serving as co-convener for 200-2002 with **Carol Willis**, Gainesville for the Florida District Women & Religion Committee.

Gloria Marvin has completed a highly successful two years of leadership and service. Florida District W&R has been blessed with a variety of talented and gifted women who continually make Florida District shine brightly in the National and Continental Women & Religion circles.



Congratulations...

to the **Reverend Dr. Robert P. Tucker**, minister of Lake Region UU Fellowship in Lakeland! His article, "*Death and U.U. Principles*," from the LRUUF June 2000 newsletter, *The Beacon*, was picked up and republished in the July issue of the Hemlock Society USA's *Chapter Leaders' Resource* which is distributed throughout the United States.

Southeast Winter Institute in Miami

Swim 2000



Circle of Life

Dec. 26, 2000 - Jan. 1,
2001

Homestead, Florida

Southeast Winter Institute in Miami (SWIM) is a one week Unitarian Universalist intentional community which provides religious, inspirational, educational, growth oriented programming. SWIM was founded and continues to celebrate the spirit, to promote community, and to nurture connections among people of diverse ages, backgrounds, abilities, and interests. In so doing, SWIM strives to promote our Unitarian Universalist principles.

Come and join us December 26th through January 1st in Homestead, Florida for a week of wonder and play. SWIM offers a myriad of experiences and opportunities which are challenging and nourishing to mind, body, and soul. Some of our activities are workshops, outdoor adventures, worship, art, dance, music, campfire, and athletics.

SWIM is a gathering to form an intergenerational, intentional community based on Unitarian Universalist principles and values. It nurtures open communication, inclusiveness, spirituality, and growth. It is an inspirational and safe place to play, grow, and take risks in a supportive environment; encouraging self-awareness and personal responsibility unhindered by limiting societal expectations.

Contact the registrar **Marty McAnulty** at 954-981-3469 to be put on the mailing list.

Or better still email him at mpminfla@bellsouth.net.

You can also visit our web at www.swimuu.org to see the brochure.

History Sought On Those Memorialized by Florida Women & Religion Honors

The Florida Women and Religion group's annual honors awards have always interested me, especially learning about the exciting accomplishments of the Florida women on whom the honors are bestowed. They are, without doubt, a remarkable group of women, and completely deserving of being recognized and saluted.

Two years ago at the Florida District UUA Annual Assembly held here in Miami, I was asked to make the awards on behalf of Florida Women and Religion. I considered it a singular responsibility and with pride undertook to do the awards in first class style.

When preparing for this task, I asked about the women in whose name the awards were being given...who were they and what did they do to warrant having awards given in their names?

My questions went unanswered; those people to whom my questions were addressed were unable to help me. I was able to get some minimal answers at Beacon Street, but nothing that completely satisfied my curiosity. In know that there is much more to know about these women. I intend to continue to research their lives, but what I have found is exciting and worthy of mention. Herewith follows what I have learned to date...if you have information about any of these women, about how we came to remember them with these Honors, who instigated memorializing them in this way, anything at all, do let me know. I promise to bring everything I find to the attention of our Florida sisters.

The Eleanor Elizabeth Gordon Honor
Recognition for a lifetime of service to Unitarian Universalist ideals. This award is traditionally given to an older woman.

This honor is given in the name of Eleanor Elizabeth Gordon, born in Hamilton, Illinois on October 1, 1952 in a log cabin.

She first attended the University of Iowa and later Cornell University (1889). She taught school in Centerville, Iowa and later was principal for a school in Humboldt, Iowa, where her childhood friend, Mary A. Safford was a Unitarian minister.

She traveled, at the urging of Mary

Safford, to Sioux City to take charge of a newly organized Unitarian Church. (Note: I believe she was asked to take charge of a church Sunday school, but the information is not clear. It may have been a church-run day school.)

Eleanor Elizabeth Gordon spent her life working for women's rights, and became a Unitarian minister in 1889, spending her life as a Unitarian "missionary," she wrote extensively and with her friend Mary published "OLD and NEW," a missionary magazine.

In 1912 she and Mary traveled to Florida where they established the Orlando Unitarian Church. Eleanor retired from the ministry in 1918, but kept in close touch with women's issues and with Unitarian concerns. She died in 1942 in Hamilton, Illinois at the age of 92.

The Charlotte Perkins Gillman Honor
Recognition for empowering rather than exerting power over others.

There is little in the UU archives regarding Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gillman (please notice the additional name), except that she was a prolific writer and wrote one of the first books of feminist theology, "His Religion and Hers; A Study of the Faith of Our Fathers and the Work of Our Mothers." She lived from July 3, 1860 to August 7, 1935.

(Note: I have attempted to find a copy of Ms. Gillman's work, but to date, have had no success. I plan to visit the Library of Congress on my next trip to Washington to check further. Since the records indicate that she was a "prolific writer," I should find something. A friend who is a dealer in antique books is also trying to find a copy for me. If you can help, Please let me know.)

The Olympia Brown Honor
Recognition of significant recent efforts toward achieving a non-sexist society.

Well, here I have completely struck out! No one can tell me anything about Ms. Olympia Brown! This is a situation "up with which I will not put!" That statement may not be very scholarly, but it accurately conveys my feelings on the matter. More, and some answers perchance, next time!

— DOROTHY CAREY MENADIER, MIAMI



Northeast Cluster PICNIC

Juniper Springs
Saturday, November 4, 2000
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Swimming, Wading, Canoeing

Bring food and drinks (no alcohol permitted) for your family.

Hot charcoal fires will be provided from 11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Entry Fee: \$3.00

The Northeast Cluster has arranged to pay for the first 100 picnickers!

Singer-Songwriter **Austin Church** will play and entertain you with folk music from 1:00 - 1:45 p.m. and 2:00 - 2:45 p.m.

Directions:

Juniper Springs Recreational Area is in the Ocala National Forest on State Road 40, 13 miles west of the St. John's River Bridge and 17 miles east of County Road 314. If you are traveling north or south on I-95, take Exit 88 and go west on SR 40 toward Ocala. When you arrive at the gate to Juniper Springs, tell them you are attending the Northeast Cluster UU Picnic. Proceed to the Pavillion.

Questions?

Call Larry Rayner at 321-752-4150



FLORIDA DISTRICT CALENDAR • 2000 - 2001

The information in this calendar is thought to be correct as of 9/1/2000. Please contact the District Office at (407) 894-2119 or uuaflldist@aol.com to confirm, add or change the information contained in this calendar.

September

- 1-3 FDYRUU Coming of Age Con #1 TBD
- 8-9 Board Meeting Nature Coast (Lecanto)
- 16 Program Council Orlando
- 22-23 Extension Committee Retreat Orlando
- 22-24 FDYRUU Transition Con #1 (tentative) Vero Beach
- 23 Northeast Cluster: RE Question & Answer Forum Daytona Beach

October

- 1 Campus Ministry/Young Adult Sunday
- 13-15 FDYRUU All Age Con Orlando
- 20-22 Women & Religion Fall Retreat UU in the Pines
- 20-22 Young Adult "Get Away" Con Tallahassee

November

- 4 Northeast Cluster Picnic Juniper Springs
- 5-11 Florida Leadership School..... Oviedo (Canterbury)
- 18 Board Meeting River of Grass (Sunrise)

December

- 1-2 Fall Leadership Conference & Candidate's Forum Orlando
- 8-10 FDYRUU Coming of Age Con #2 TBD
- 26-1/1 SWIM Miami

January

- 6 Nominating Committee Meeting Orlando
- 12-14 YRUU All Age Con Gainesville
- 13 Board Meeting Spirit of Life (Odessa)
- 13 Extension Committee Meeting Orlando
- 14 Treasure Coast UU Society Building Dedication Stuart
- 15 Deadline for the Sunshine—Winter Edition
- 26-28 FDYRUU Coming of Age Con #3 TBD

February

- 2-4 Small Congregation Growth Workshop
- 2-4 Social Action Con #1 (tentative) TBD
- 3 Program Council Meeting Orlando
- 23-25 All Age Con Lakeland

March

- 10 Board Meeting Fort Myers
- 16-18 FDYRUU Leadership Development Conference (tentative) TBD
- 30-4/1 FDYRUU Transition Con #2 TBD

April

- 6-7 District Annual Assembly & Board MeetingOviedo (Canterbury)
- 6-7 FDYRUU Youth Caucus/Annual Meeting..... TBD
- 6-9 FDYRUU Coming of Age Con #4 Boston
- 16 Deadline for the Sunshine—Spring Edition

May

- 12 Extension Committee Meeting Orlando
- 18-20 Social Action Con #2 (tentative) TBD

June

- 1-2 Program Council Retreat Orlando

Key to Abbreviations:

- Con Conference (generally refers to Youth Conferences)
- FDYRUU Florida District Young Religious Unitarian Universalists
- FUUMA Florida Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association
- OWL..... Our Whole Lives (sexuality education)
- RE Religious Education

Florida District Board of Directors

Officers

- President Ed Porteus, Ft. Myers
- Vice President Kathy Converse, Jacksonville
- Secretary . Julie Smith-Dary, Daytona Beach (Community)
- Treasurer John Asgeirson, Miami (First UU)

Directors

- 2000 Jim Luce, Melbourne
- 2001 Peter Goldhammer, St. Petersburg
- 2001 Frank Dunn, Sarasota
- 2003 Rev. Ken Beldon, Sunrise (River of Grass)
- 2003 .. Rev. Carole Robinson Yorke, Odessa (Spirit of Life)

District Executive - Ex-Officio

- 2001 Rev. Mary C. Higgins, Orlando



Newsletter of the

FLORIDA DISTRICT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

1901 E. Robinson Street, Suite 18 • Orlando, FL 32803