

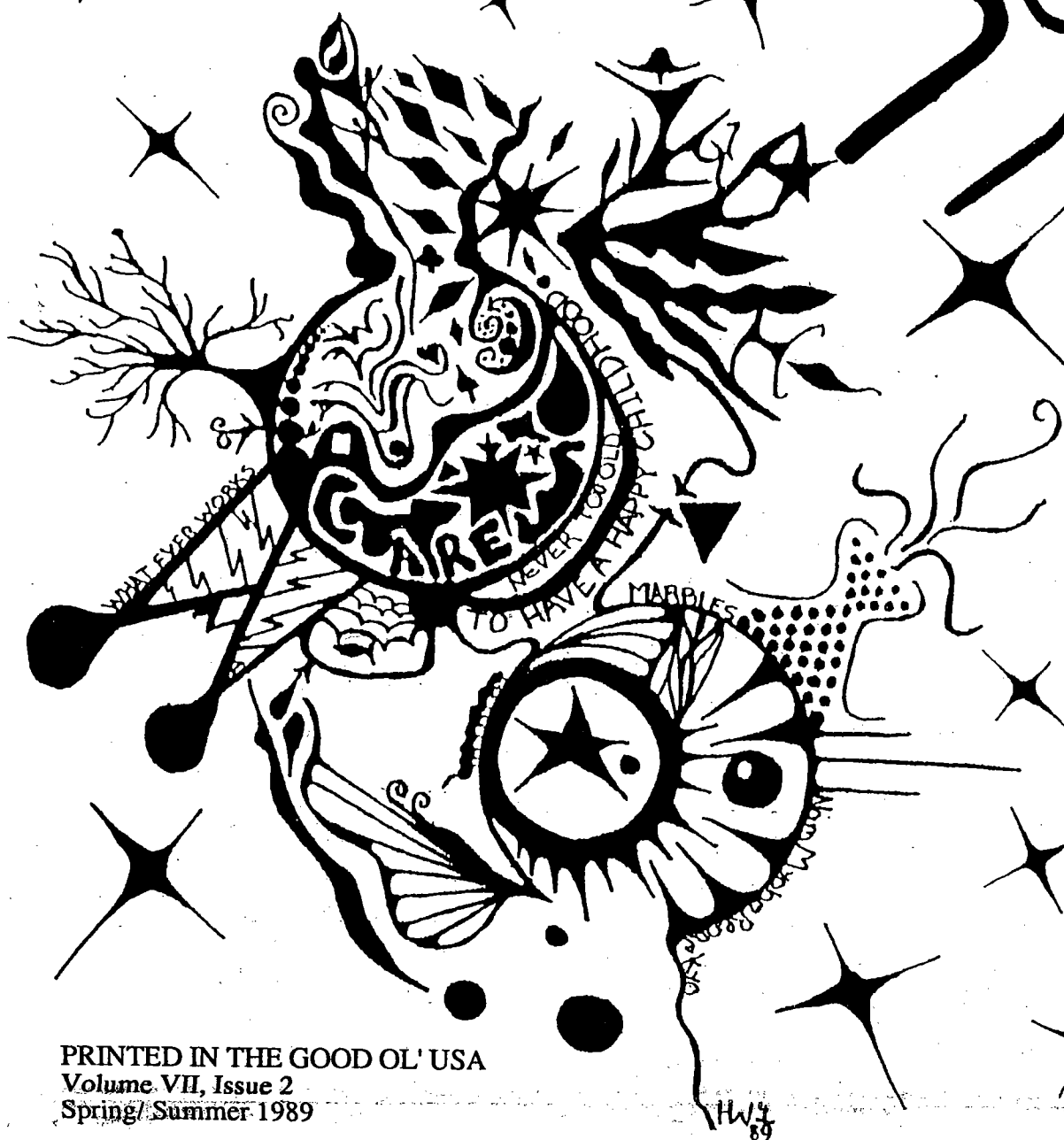


UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION
of Congregations
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108-2800
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NonProfit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BOSTON, MASS
Permit No: 8652

Synapse

"A point of contact
where energy
and information
are exchanged."



Welcoming Youth Into the Church

PRINTED IN THE GOOD OL' USA
Volume VII, Issue 2
Spring/Summer 1989

DISTRICT NEWS

Investigators discovered a long lost YRUU secret: the continental youth movement is as strong as ever. Across the continent district correspondents report conferences, intergenerational events, and flourishing district newsletters. Contact your Youth Council Member (listed on next page) for more information.

Ballou Channing: is practically non-existent. There is no YAC, and very few active youth groups.

Central Mass.: is growing rapidly. The average age of the district is 15 to 16. The YAC (Youth Adult Committee) works well together and is energetic and dedicated. They have Jr. positions on their YAC (each person has a person in training to work with who takes over the job when that person leaves). The district YAC is having trouble getting adults. While planning their last conference they publicized that if they didn't get more adults signed up they were going to cancel the conference. They got several adults to sign up quickly.

Central Midwest: recently held a successful conference: "Mystic Mad-Con". They have been looking for support and trust from adults, in addition to, looking for a way to solve conflicts between youth, District Executives and other adults on the District Board.

Connecticut Valley: Local youth groups are stronger than the YAC. They are planning a conference in the spring called "Pilgrimage to Playtime". The new Youth Council Representative will be elected at this conference. One local is very active in planning a church service and a Youth Group retreat.

Florida: Several conferences in the past year (including one on Sexuality) - the district is growing. There is still a problem with lack of adult involvement. The YAC now has a wider representation of youth, but Miami is barely involved, Alabama and Georgia are not involved at all, so, Clearwater, Ft. Meyers, and Jacksonville

primarily make up the district. There is a newsletter for advisors which comes out 2 to 3 times a year. May start an advisor support "road show" and travel around to drum up enthusiasm for adult support in YRUU.

Joseph Priestley: held a conference in Annapolis to elect a new YCR and change its bylaws. A Post-high conference was held in May. There are strong groups in the north and south, but there is little communication between them.

Mass. Bay: just held its first elections since 1985 at their spring conference. There are two positions on their YAC for Jr. High conference planners, and they have held Jr. High conferences. There will be a Walk for Peace in the fall, planned with Central Mass.

Metro New York: held a Youth/ Adult Leadership Development Conference in April. Very few societies have youth groups in this district besides Plandome church which recently held a Youth Sunday Service.

Michigan: held a conference May 19-21 called "7 Purposes and Principles of UUism." The YAC may be sponsoring a YRUU caravan in 1990. The YAC published its first newsletter in four years. A winter conference was held with 40 people attending.

Mid-South: held a conference in Memphis in February. There was a spring conference in Pensacola, FL, sponsored by a local youth group. Their YAC is "going well" despite a lack of Jr.. Highers.

Mountain Desert: is pretty disjointed. There are strong locals in Ft. Collins, Golden, 1st Universalist Denver, CO Springs, Salt Lake City, Albuquerque, and Lubbock. The Boulder group is non-existent after the "removal" of their advisor on charges of sexual abuse. The district Youth Council Rep. has declared a state of YRUU emergency--she needs any help possible to

get the district back on its feet. A leadership conference is planned for youth and adults in Ft. Collins in November.

New Hampshire-Vermont: is going strong. They almost lost 3/4 of their budget this spring, but some YAC officials, on the district adult board, kept the board from cutting their budget. "Adventure Con", a huge spring conference, is planned for Memorial Day weekend at Bear Brook State Park.

Northeast: Strong dedication and work has gotten this district on its feet again. In the past year, the YAC has increased awareness of continental happenings. They had two conferences this year. The spring conference was at the Hersey UU Retreat center (52 of 85 people who signed up were 14 and under). They are getting their newsletter together in a growing, but young district.

Ohio Meadville: Exciting changes are happening here. This spring they held their first conference in a church. The theme was "Spiritual Interconnection."

Ohio Valley: This district held a conference in Lexington, OH. They hold three conferences per year--Nov., Jan., and Apr. Their YAC is growing. They changed their bylaws to allow youth ages 13-20 to attend district events.

Pacific Central: West-Con has 25 applicants so far, so it may be cancelled. There has been an almost complete turnover in leadership on the YAC. A worship team introduces adults to YRUU worship. This district officially supports the age-range change. The Youth Council resolution on Welcoming Youth into the Church has had very positive effects.

Pacific Northwest: successful spring conference called "Dare to be Different", was attended by 80 people. The YAC has good contact with the adult board, but have too few people on the YAC to get everything

done. The Youth Council rep. has started a conference planning manual to show local youth groups how to run conferences.

Pacific Southwest: has a "lack of vision" on the part of youth and advisors. Old leaders are burning out, and new leaders are flaking out because they have no shared goal. This district was invited to PCD's conference in May; PCD wants to adopt PSWD to help them get on their feet again.

Prarie Star: had a successful annual conference this year with 119 people. They elected an all new YAC with a Jr. and Post High reps. There are some problems with adults not wanting to share leadership with youth.

Southwest: really has its act together. At their spring YAC meeting they had 1/2 new and 1/2 old people in leadership positions--a good model for passing on leadership to new people. The YAC chair is in touch with the adult district, and goes to district board and district RE meetings. The new District Executive is very helpful with the needs of the youth. The YAC is sending a youth to the General Assembly. The YAC had a 50% response to their writing campaign to the churches (they sent letters and made phone calls) in order to get names for their mailing list. Their YAC plans to have 6 newsletters by July.

St. Lawrence: has a strong YAC and leadership is shared. They held several good conferences this year. A big conference in April had Scott Keeler, former Youth Staff, leading a leadership workshop. This year's summer conference will have leadership and advisor workshops.

Thomas Jefferson: YAC is working hard. Their first newsletter is out! They held their first sanctioned conference in Charlotte. A Fall conference in Ashville is planned.

Western Canada: Particular youth groups are having trouble, but the WC Annual District Meeting will have a youth caucus.



"Don't let the dream die" -Martin Luther King Jr.

"The light at the end of the tunnel is merely the light of an oncoming train." -Ancient Ohio Proverb

"To do is to be" -Socrates
"To be is to do" -Aristotle
"Do be do be do" -Sinatra



"We know one thing at the cost of not knowing something else, and it is simply not the case that we can choose to know everything at once." -William Barrett
"The best mind altering drug is truth." -Lily Tomlin



"The soul takes flight to the world that is invisible, and there arriving she is sure of bliss, and forever dwells in paradise" -Plato
"And the storm is breaking or so it seems. We're too young to reason, too grown up to dream." -Brian Ferry of Roxy Music

Youth Council Representatives

Ballou Channing
Brendan O'Neal
20 Carver St.
Green Harbor, MA 02041
(617) 837-9389

Central Mass
Jackie Scott
2 Central St.
Acton, MA 01720
(508) 263-1726

Central Midwest
Valerie Tremelat
1212 Wellesley Rd.
Madison, WI 53705
(608) 223-1558

Connecticut Valley
Kathy Pinto
1856 State Street
Hamden, CT 06511
(203) 624-6196

Desert
unknown
contact Parisa Parsa
address below

Florida
Jill Huebner
10258 Fontana Ct. N
Jacksonville, FL 32225
(904) 642-1637

Joseph Priestley
Adam Winner
RD1 Box 297
Emmaus, PA 18049
(215) 967-3656

Mass Bay
Meri Powers
12 Dean Rd.
Wayland, MA 01778
(508) 655-3697

Metro New York
Kamal Nigam
102 Howard Way
Pennington, NJ 08534
(609) 446-4109

Michigan
Randy Reiss
592 Hanna
Birmingham, MI 48009
(313) 644-8954

Mid-South
Sean Ramsey
336 Hawthorne
Memphis, TN 30112
(901) 728-6175

Mountain
Jen Majors
Box 970
Monument, CO 80132
(719) 481-4256

New Hampshire-Vermont
unknown
contact Tom Doyle
address below

Northeast
Sara Lentz
RFD #2 Box 3458
Bowdoinham, ME 04008
(207) 729-8862

Ohio Meadville
Spencer Medvick
3715 Traynham Rd.
Shaker Heights, OH 44122
(216) 991-9536

Ohio Valley
Barney Beal
1335 Highland Ave.
Louisville, KY 40204
(502) 584-2332

Pacific Central
Jennifer Cullison
1016 Begonia
Alameda, CA 95401
(415) 523-4673

Pacific Northwest
Natalie Hamm
511 E. Roy #415
Seattle, WA 98102
(206) 324-7943

Pacific South West
Becky Silva
3246 Los Coyotes
Long Beach, CA 90808
(213) 420-6192

Prairie Star
Mandi Cohen
8010 Lillibridge
Lincoln, NE 68506
(402) 483-0480

Saint Lawrence
Catarina Penalosa
425 West Delavan
Buffalo, NY 14213
(716) 881-0621

Southwest & retiring SC
Christina Branum
8903 Rowan
Houston, TX 77036
(713) 771-8495

Thomas Jefferson
Erin Coleman
1817 River Shore Dr.
Knoxville, TN 37914
(615) 525-7056

Western Canada
Christina Gowans
702 Crescent Rd., NW
Calgary, Alberta T2M 4A7
(403) 283-9603

Jr. High At-large
Jamey Montgomery
705 Cambridge Ln.
Hoffman Estates, IL 60195
(301) 882-8256

Sr. High At-large
Tom Doyle
PO Box 118
Temple, NH 03084
(603) 878-1654

Post High At-large
Julie Rising
1402 Regent St. #530
Madison, WI 53711
(608) 256-4535

Adult At-large
Scott Buxton
611 San Julio
Solana Beach, CA 92075
(619) 481-7051

Adult At-large
Susan Dermon
118 Garden St.
Roslyn Heights, NY 11577
(516) 484-5965

Adult At-large
Holly Jamison
610 Cedar Lane
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056
(312) 253-8647

Adult At-large
Roger Hollon
265 Hanna Rd.
Mason, MI 48854
(517) 623-6770

Adult At-large
Pat Pope
2825 23rd St.
Lubbock, TX 79410
(806) 793-2674

Adult At-large
Connie Goodbread
478 Limewood Ave.
Dunedin, FL 34698
(813) 733-5831

Retiring Steering Committee
Adam Leite
77 Willow Ave.
Walnut Creek, CA 94595
(415) 939-4911

Retiring SC
Heather Wright
5490 Douglas Lane
Sebastopol, CA 95472
(707) 887-7752

Retiring SC
Parisa Parsa
1716 Coal Place SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106
(505) 242-2153

Retiring SC
Jeff Jamison
610 Cedar Lane
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056
(312) 253-8647

Retiring SC Adult
Duane Dowell
929 Loganwood Ave.
Richardson, TX 75080
(214) 644-2233

REAC Representative
Graham Smith
3 Windsor Dr.
Amherst, NH 03031
(603) 673-2824

Board of Trustees Representative
Erv Miller
921 Third Ave., SE
Rochester, MN 55904
(507) 282-2429



"The pen is mightier than the sword. So in this dangerous world, always carry a pen." -author unknown



"All great truths begin as blasphemies." -George Bernard Shaw



"Life's a bitch and so's your dog's mother." -Kathy Pinto

"Let the wild rumpus start" -Maurice Sendak

"The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and thus we drift into unparalleled catastrophe." -Albert Einstein



"I should like to bury something precious in every place where I've been happy. And then, when I am old and ugly and miserable, I can come back and dig it up and remember." -Evelyn Waugh

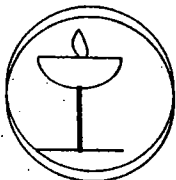


"In a guilty society, the only sin is getting caught" -Hunter S. Thompson

"Our task as UU's I believe is clear. It is to take seriously the monistic premise of the unity of all creation. And to work out its implications for world peace in a consistent and cognizant way." -J. Atkinson



"Virginity is it's own reward" -Ruth Taylor (Connie Goodbread's mother)



"Adult support is good when you can get it, but it sure is hard to find" -Erin Coleman



"There was never any more inception than there is now; nor any more youth or age than there is now; and will never be any more perfection than there is now; nor any more heaven or hell than there is now" -Walt Whitman





Dak, all I wanted to say was I LOVE YOU, but I didn't know how to say it. Whew! It's said. I'm sorry for being what I am. You're a wonderful friend. Gracias! Jenna Martin

To Mel, Amy and Cath: Thanks for always being here for me. I love you guys much more than I could ever express. You will forever be kept safe in my heart. Love eternally, Jenna (the "odd" one)

Tulsa Univ. Buddies, YC '88: My purple meal pass bracelet just broke after 8 months of being away from you—a la SPRING BREAK in FLORIDA. Jill

To anyone who remembers me from Winter Camps '85 and '86 at deBenneville: Just wanted to say I haven't dropped off the earth—I've just gone to college! I miss hearing from you guys. Write me: Karen Coffin, 20 University Drive, Cal Poly Pomona, Pomona, CA 91768

Matt? Matt? Is that you? What a HUGE bug Sam! Speak of the ZZ. I was on STAGE when 69 WELL DRESSED THUGS put a pair of CHEAP SUNGLASSES on my SLEEPING BAG. Sam Samson and Ted Postal ARE 18 as of 10/1/70, I swear! ZZly yours: Tom, Ted, Dusty

Burlee—So, now that you're not like me anymore, do you think there is anyone like me left? And how long do you think I will stay like me? Or were you and Erik right all along? Chris III thinks so, he couldn't believe I swore!! I love you forever—Elizabeth

Chris (IV)—Never despair. You fit in here. Love, Bizbeth

Jonah—Is 19 as good as 9? I haven't gotten to 19 yet, so I figure there's a chance there. No chance with 9, we're too close as friends. Oh, well. Elizabeth

Sica,sica,—Maybe we can plan our futures if we compare notes. Stop Showing Up Everywhere I go!!! Silly girl, I love you. Elizabeth

Young Adults: SWIM is the Southeast Winter Institute in Miami, held annually on 26 December—1 January. I am a three-time attendee and am organizing a road trip to SWIM '89. For more information contact, John C. Watson, 151 Stanton Avenue, Newton, MA 02166-3006, (413) 586-1032 (the real number until September). P.S. Sean Corb says "Hi!" generally. (He's at the Mountain)

Jesus, I miss you!! I know you're busy, but please write me. Love, Virgin Mary

Hello Chris Smith! This is your weird Chapel Hill friend. I want to see you and have another one of those Saturdays! I love you! P.S. This is your second personal - WOW!!

Hello friends! I want to know all of you. If you write me, I will write to you. I love every one of you. Write: Lynn Oleson, 535 Caswell Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. THANKS!

Oh Adam! Dear Adam! I feel like I've lost you forever. Please write again and I'll see you at GA '89. Love and Peace, Pilar

Rin — MWA — L. P.S. Now you're one of those guys who gets personals in the youth newspaper.

Emma - I love your bunny face. Eat your oats. Your nice mommy

To all you SWUUSI people: I miss the late night skinny dipping, hugging, talks about life, and love that goes on at Texoma! Can't wait until August! Love, Cath K.

To Jenna: You are so dear to me! The distance and my phone bill are huge but it is worth it. Thanx for putting up with my wild moods. Can't wait to see you and all the Dallas gang soon! I love you so! Peace! Cath K.

Dear Kate White, Remember me? It's so wonderful to know you still care so much about YRUU. Our youth group no longer meets, but I'd love to attend a conference and see! It's been too long! Write me! Love, peace and joy, Sabrina Douglass

Joshua Y. Hello my love. I love you. California was wonderful, and so were you. Purr! Love, Warm fuzzies, and bed-time stories, Tracy

Givingtree bear—Still flying high above you. Soaring through the sky. I love you. And always say "see you later", never bye-bye. All my feathers, Eagle Bear

Emily, old sport, your work in NED is most appreciated. Bendy has found a home on the nape of Godzilla, and is still smiling—Thanks tons. JH

Rennie!! come visit me again when I'm not in a 3 day meeting! I miss hanging out with you and the Bunchies!! xoxo anne

Dear Mom and Dad and Jonathan, I am going to college...it's a scary thought. I just wanted to thank you all for keeping me in line and loving me all the way. You all mean the world to me. I love you, Keara.

Jeremy, I love you...what can I say? You're the best thing that ever happened to me. I'm not afraid anymore, my life without you would be like a sunset without the brilliant shades of color. Our life together is just beginning, there's more! I love you, Keara.

Dearest wifey PARISA. Let it be that we never stray far from each other. You are an incredible woman! Is there another polish sausage market on the horizon? Camel filters bring back fond memories. Love, the woman, the legend = VAL. (Le editor note—That part about you being "an incredible woman" goes double for me, JH, hombre secreto agente)

Val wants to praise all of her favorite UU's: Meri, Jake, Aaron, Kiva, Anne, Julie, Brendan, Anna, Ben, Jon, Petita, Chris, KK, Arthur, John and Paul for pulling off the most fantastic conference ever: MYSTIC MAD-CON! Can you ever forgive me for being a bitchy nag?

JESSE, d'you remember us? I miss you. A meager postcard would suffice, you know. Sam and I eagerly await the next Bearbrook Con. Sha na na— it's time to change... Love, Becky

Kater—I'm damn proud of you for keeping Mass Bay together. You and everyone. I love you all, I feel like a (damn) proud mother. Elizabeth

Last Will and Testament to Ellen Brandenburg, Former Director of Youth Programs.

We, the undersigned, being mindless and bodiless, bequeath the following goodies to the Reverend Ellen Brandenburg,

1. What's left of the big bag of AYS condoms and jellies that lived under your desk—they're about to expire, better hurry.
2. All auction items that didn't sell from Con-Con '84-'88. Ick.
3. Daily RE Dept. staff meetings.
4. The UUA credit card so you can take us out for another exuberantly fancy meal.
5. The Youth Council Budget.
6. Moo-cow and other practical jokes.
7. All the conflicts between Youth Staff that gave you gray hair.
8. Cabins with lots of bugs.
9. And lots of other things we'll send later through inter-office mail!

NEW YRUU T-SHIRT!!

Starting in late September, a new YRUU t-shirt will be available. The cost will be approximately \$8.00 US. Contact the Youth Office if you want to order them for yourself, your youth group, or to sell at a conference. YRUU buttons continue to be available for 50 cents US.



Our cover artist, Heather Wright, comes to us from Pacific Southwest District. She is the 1988 Youth Council Jr. High At-large and a member of the Steering Committee this year—where, when she was caught doodling, was asked to turn over her artwork to serve as a cover for *Synapse*.

\$\$Write For Synapse !\$\$

The next issue of *Synapse* will be about the past and future of YRUU. It will be called "Roots and Wings: YRUU History, Traditions and Visions" Two \$20 cash prizes will be awarded for the best articles on this theme. The articles can be on anything from a tradition you remember from YRUU (did someone say foofing?) to where you think YRUU should go from here. This prize is available due to a donation from a *Synapse* subscriber.

Everything To Know About Synapse

Synapse is a publication of Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, the youth organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108-2800. Subscription is free. Two issues per annum.

Staff—Meg Riley, Jason Happel, Anne Sontheimer, Julie Geanakakis and UU youth everywhere.

Mechanicals—Proofreading, editing and layout by your friendly staff (above.)

Editorial Policy - Articles for *Synapse* are chosen from among those submitted by Unitarian Universalist youth and adults working with youth, and other interested parties. Articles are chosen on the basis of content and quality, with some preference given to new authors. All written materials are subject to editing before publication, and graphics may be enhanced. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the editors or the majority readership. Opposing opinions are encouraged.

Submissions Policy—Each submission must have name and address attached. Multiple submissions accepted. The editors observe the following limits for each author's submission:

Articles: One per issue of each of 3 types: theme, news, and reflective.

Poems: One per issue.

Personals: Two per issue, up to 50 words each.

Graphics: No limit.

Submissions not used will be kept on file for possible future use. Name may be withheld upon request. If you wish to be notified prior to publication, enclose a self-addressed envelope (no stamp necessary).

Advertising—Rates for camera-ready for UUA-related groups are:

Standard	Special (need advance warning)
\$10.00 -per (2.25") column-inch	\$13.00 - per (3.25") column-inch
\$45.00 -eighth of a page	\$65.00 - sixth of a page
\$90.00 -quarter of a page	\$130.00 - third of a page

For all other (non-UU) groups, these rates are double. For non-camera-ready ads, there is an additional fee of up to \$25.00, negotiable with the Youth Office. Advertisements do not carry the endorsement of the Youth Office or YRUU. The editors reserve the right to refuse any advertisements.

Submission and Advertising Due Date for Next issue: October 15, 1989

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

To the Editors:

There has been an increasing focus on the plight of the hungry in America over the past several years, and many people have contributed much time and effort to excellent programs like soup kitchens and food banks. I recently had the opportunity to learn about a group that is taking a much more fundamental approach to the food "shortage" in the U.S., an approach that I think many UUs might like to help facilitate in their own cities and towns.

I recently met a man named Ray Buchanan, a Methodist minister who four years ago began the Potato Project. This is a recycling program that takes potatoes and other vegetables that are unmarketable because of blemishes, odd coloring or size, and moves them to where they are needed- the food banks and soup kitchens of the country. In the four years it has been operating, the Potato Project has distributed over 53 million pounds of potatoes that would otherwise have been thrown out.

The farmers giving these vegetables provide transportation to the food banks, thus allowing the Potato

Project to serve a purely connective role: hooking up farmer' potatoes with people who would love to eat them. Money to pay the transportation cost comes from donations from churches that are Potato Project partners. The project is currently running in 47 states and D.C.

Rev. Buchanan's project salvages more wasted produce through a gleaning program called the Harvest of Hope, where youth groups go into the potato fields after the harvesters and glean the potatoes missed by the machines. Youth also go through an intensive seminar on hunger problems.

Both the Potato Project and the Harvest of Hope are administered through the Society of St. Andrew, a community dedicated to working against the problem of hunger. For more information, contact the Society of St. Andrew, Route 1 Box 283, Big Island, Virginia, 24256, (804) 299-5956.

In Ray Buchanan's words, "Hunger is not a problem. It is an obscenity."

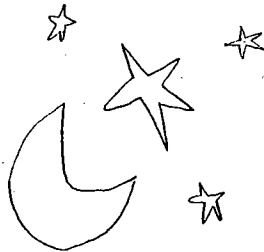
Heather Elliott

To the Editors:

The last week of July has become a special time for many of us who work with UU youth in the Southeast. It's a time every year when hundreds of youth gather in Radford, Virginia for SUUSI, the intergenerational Southeastern UU Summer Institute.

SUUSI is a week-long experience like you've never had before. It's such a good thing that we want to spread the word. Imagine a week that includes late-night discussion circles, tubing on the New River, hikes, camp fires, skits, dances, crafts, tie-dyeing, a live rock band, swimming, a youth-only dormitory, great food, worship, and more hugs than you can count. That's SUUSI.

For a brochure, write to Bill Gupton, SUUSI Teen Director, 819 Belgrade Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30306.



The *Letters to the Editors* section is a regular feature if we receive letters! If you have any ideas or comments on YRUU, *Synapse*, or anything else-please write to us: Youth Office-UUA, 25 Beacon St. Boston, MA 02108. In the future, the editors will not accept letters containing advertising. If you wish to place an ad, information is available in "Everything to Know about *Synapse*".



New Youth Programs Specialist!



Attention all YRUUs. Prepare for an invasion from the Great White North. Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Becky Scott and I will be your new Youth Programs Specialist in the Youth Office at the UUA as of September 1, 1989. At that time I hope to fill the office at "53" with boundless energy and enthusiasm. In order for you to feel like you know something about the voice at the end of the phone (when you call) or the name at the bottom of the page (when you write), please allow me to tell you something about myself.

I am originally from Vancouver, British Columbia, but I have spent my last two years at McGill University (studying English Literature and perfecting my franglais, bien sur) in Montreal, Quebec. Without music, I am helpless. In an attempt to satisfy my melodic cravings, I produce a weekly radio show, at Radio McGill, which features Canadian independent bands. I also try to see as many bands as is physically possible, I think I am loosing my hearing as a consequence. My most marketable manual skill is scooping ice-cream (and my favorite flavor is mocha almond fudge).

In previous years, I have been spotted at Youth Councils and Con-Cons from Portland to Tulsa. I have a lot of trouble sitting still so, if you were there you probably saw me dancing around the clock. If not, I hope I will have the opportunity to dance with you in the coming year. Feel free to call me up at the Youth Office anytime, I also love to chat.

New Youth Programs Director!

Hello, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Meg Amelia Riley, and I am the new Youth Programs Director. Beginning July 1, I'll be sharing the office at 53 Beacon Street with the Youth Specialists.

I come to this job from six years working in Religious Education programs in U-U churches in Minneapolis. I believe that the teen years are absolutely pivotal in everyone's faith journey. Part of that belief is grounded in my own experiences growing up in U-U churches. These experiences, both positive and negative, were in large part responsible for my decisions to go to seminary and to work as a religious educator.

I'm scared about leaving Minneapolis and all of my friends here. I've been here since I graduated from Reed College out in Portland, Oregon, eleven years ago. But Boston is really exciting. The YRUU folks I have met so far at the YRUU Steering Committee meeting were wonderful and welcoming, and the Religious Education staff on Beacon Street are an inspiring crew to work with.

I'll see some of you at Con-Con and the Youth Council meeting, and I look forward to meeting many others of you through the pages of *Synapse*.



YRUU REVIEW REPORT PUBLISHED

by Eugene B. Navias, UUA
Director of Religious Education
and member of the Five Year
Review Committee

YRUU, A Five Year Review of
Programs for Youth, has been
published and widely distributed.
If you have not seen a copy, ask
your DRE, minister or District
Youth Council representative.

When a review was requested two
years ago by YRUU, the UUA
Board appointed a seven person
committee, chaired by Rev. Dan
Hotchkiss, and including: Larissa
Blakeley youth involved in local
programming; Ann Harnor, UUA
Board liaison to YRUU; Miki
Conn, local youth leader; Laila
Ibrahim, former YRUU Youth
Staff Specialist; Rebecca Scott,
YRUU Council member, and me,
UUA RE Department Director.
The Committee circulated a flood
of questionnaires, held GA
hearings, interviewed Wayne
Arnason (father of YRUU) and
others and sent members to YRUU
Council meetings in 1988 and
1989.

The report shares some important
findings:

- that YRUU has been highly
successful in many ways
- that youth programming needs a
lot more support from local
congregations, DREs, Ministers,
districts, and the UUA.

What happens to the report? The
report was mailed on the same day
to members of the YRUU Council
and members of the UUA Board
of Trustees. The YRUU Steering
Committee discussed the report in
great depth at its April 27-30
meetings and will be making its
recommendations on potential by-
laws changes to the YRUU
Council when it meets in Michigan
this August. Any proposals from
the Council on by-laws changes
will then be forwarded to the UUA
Board for its October meeting. By-
laws changes adopted by the
Board will then go back to the
Council in 1990 for ratification or
further amendment. You can see
that it is quite a thorough process.

There are recommendations for
improving junior high
programming and putting the
"religious" back into curriculum
and other related services to UU
youth that have already been
forwarded to the UUA and the
districts for action.

The Review Committee hopes that
people will read and pay attention
to the report so that there is better
support for junior high, senior
high and post-high youth
throughout the denomination!
Readers of *Synapse* will be an
important part of the
implementation of this report!!!

Extra copies of the report are
available for \$3.50 (including
mailing and postage) by writing
the Youth Office at 25 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02108.

LOOK WHAT WE FOUND IN THE FILES!!!!

Business Resolution on Youth submitted by unanimous vote of the UU
Youth Caucus and passed by the 1978 General Assembly.

WHEREAS, young people not only constitute a significant proportion of the Unitarian Universalist Association at the present time, but also hold the promise of providing the mature men and women needed to maintain the Unitarian Universalist faith in the years ahead; and

WHEREAS, These young people are at a stage of their lives crucial to the development of their religious values and beliefs; and

WHEREAS, meaningful youth programs run with the help of adult resource people can be beneficial to all involved; and

WHEREAS, there is considerable uncertainty at the present time concerning the future of denominational programs designed to involve and benefit youth;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1978 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association recognizes the crucial importance of youth programs and the need for developing leadership skills and self-reliance through youth administration of these programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly

1. urges all Unitarian Universalists to become more knowledgeable about the nature of existing youth programs and to re-examine the various stereotypes about youth,
2. calls on the members of individual churches and fellowships to promote greater involvement of young people in their societies and districts through Youth Adult Committees and other forms of intergenerational activities and dialogue,
3. calls on the Administration of the Unitarian Universalist Association to work cooperatively with Liberal Religious Youth in developing energetic youth programs at the denominational level, and
4. urges that these programs be given a high priority in the formulation of UUA budgets in the immediate future so that they may receive funds sufficient to meet their legitimate needs and in fair proportion to the importance of young people to the denomination.



YOUTH STAFF POSITION

Applications for the UUA Youth Staff position beginning January 1, 1990 through December 31, 1990 are now being accepted.

The successful applicant will: be between the ages of 16 and 22 at the time work begins; have an amiable personality with leadership qualities; have good written and verbal communication skills; have the maturity and creativity to handle an often hectic but rewarding full time job and; have the freedom to live in the Boston area and travel.

The following qualifications are also considered important:

Some experience writing/editing a newspaper; YRUU and other leadership experience; the ability to work sensitively and diplomatically with people of all ages; an understanding of Unitarian Universalism and of YRUU history, issues and structure; good mental, physical, and emotional health; and an ability to work under pressure.

The responsibilities include:

working with the UUA Director of Youth Programs, in conjunction with the other Youth Staff person, to carry out the administration of Young Religious Unitarian Universalists. Duties will include but not be limited to: preparing a youth newspaper; traveling to district and local groups as outreach; planning and administering conferences and other youth gatherings; participating in meeting of and implementing recommendations of the YRUU Youth Council and Steering Committee; and managing the continental YRUU office.

To apply:

Please submit a resume typed on 8 1/2 x 11 paper including UU and pertinent non-UU skills and experience relevant to the above qualifications. Include your phone number and date of birth. Along with your resume, please submit an application letter and three letters of recommendation.

Questions you might address in writing your application letter:

- 1) *What's in it for us?* Include your visions for YRUU, your special areas of interest or focus, your experience with leadership development and problem-solving, and experiences with working with different age groups.
- 2) *What's in the job for you?* Include how it will fit into your life plans and personal goals.
- 3) *What is your relationship to YRUU?* What does the "religious" in YRUU mean to you? What influence has YRUU had on your life and what would you like it to have.
- 4) *What are your strengths and where do you feel you need to improve?*

Your application MUST be postmarked by September 15, 1989 and sent to YRUU Steering Committee, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108-2800.

Youth Office Contest #3562!!

OK folks, this one is quick and easy. Find the word, in one of the many articles in this issue, which signifies the most famous YRUU tradition. *Hint: it starts and ends with an "f".* Write down on a piece of paper the name of the article it is in, your name and address, enclose \$300 (just kidding), send it to the Youth Office and we will send you a Free YRUU Button!!!! p.s.: this was originally a typo, but we decided to leave it in anyway and make a contest out of it-wahoo, and good luck!

Resolution on Welcoming Youth into the Church



WHEREAS both youth and adult members of the U.U.A. and C.U.C. have expressed desire to empower youth and young adults, and to affirm youth and young adult culture, through the joint creation of a shared healthy, religious community; AND WHEREAS Youth Council 1988 recognizes the need for continued cooperative work towards the achievement of this shared goal; THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in order to achieve this goal the members of the Youth Council 1988 individually pledge themselves to affect change in the following ways:

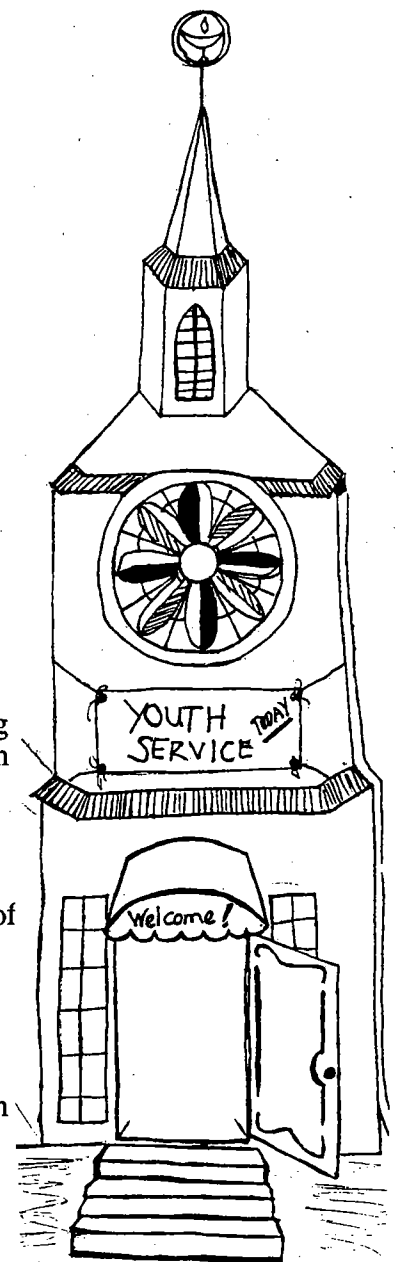
- assist the members of their district youth organizations to write letters of concern to their district executives...
- arrange for their district youth governing organizations or representatives to meet with adult district organization and/or district ministers' organization to...
- encourage youth to get on Sunday service committees of their local churches...
- submit articles on this subject to both their youth and adult district publications, and..
- send mailing to their respective districts' congregational leaders explaining possible ways in which our community could be enriched by the inclusion of youth and youth culture (music, readings, subject matter) in Sunday morning services, AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Youth Council 1988 directs the 1988-89 Steering Committee or its representatives to press for:

- the inclusion of the concept of ministry to young persons in the curricula of leadership training schools and U.U. seminaries, and
- attention to prospective ministers' attitudes toward young persons by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, and
- confirmation of action taken by U.U.M.A. in response to the 1987-88 Steering Committee's letter; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Spring 1989 issue of *Synapse* have a theme on Youth in the Church and how they make a difference; AND,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT the 1988-89 Steering Committee request to meet with the presidents of the C.U.C and U.U.A. to discuss action on this resolution.



Welcoming Youth: A Neat Idea

by Jason Happel

It was a hot and sticky August afternoon. The troops were feeling the humility of the humidity; victory seemed unlikely. But, suddenly, out of nowhere, the Resolution on Welcoming Youth into the Church came before the 1988 YRUU Youth Council. Hope twinkled in eyes throughout the council. Finally, a resolution to end all resolutions was being considered. Several enthusiastic representatives rose to speak. An all-pro debate supported the final draft, which was adopted; and appears in this issue of *Synapse* (see this page.)

The Youth Council proudly adopted this resolution that articulates a desire to be welcomed into the church by adult members of our UU congregation, to be a part of the process that creates a healthy, intergenerational, religious community. As stated in the resolution, council members pledged to change the situations within churches that are incompatible with the mutual interest among UUs to empower youth. The resolution was intended to be a strong voice and example of the effort youth would put forth to better the relationship between youth and adults, to cooperate with adults in our spiritual growth.

The resolution aims to voice our desire to strengthen the youth movement within churches, so that all youth feel like strong, capable members of the religious community who can carry on the vision of better youth/adult relations in future generations. One need not look further than the resolution itself to see the accomplishments of the Youth Council in their dreams for a better world.



CONTACT THE YOUTH OFFICE!

- for ways to welcome youth into your church
- for information about youth conferences and events
- for ideas and resources for youth groups
- for help in starting a youth group
- if you want to become a youth advisor
- if you know someone who doesn't receive *Synapse*

YRUU Youth Office
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 742-2100

Welcoming Youth Into The Church: the "Coming of Age" Program

By Anne Sontheimer

When I was in High School, adults in my local church sponsored a program called "Coming of Age". The purpose of the program was to celebrate the transition between high school and post- high school for UU youth. Our program consisted of learning about UU history, doing service projects, taking a tour of UU churches in Virginia, and writing a credo statement of our beliefs to be read at a church service. We did all of these things with the help of our "mentors" who were adults from our church.

Several other churches around the country have done similar projects. A notebook of their programs has been compiled by Ellen Brandenburg and is available from the Youth Office. The "Coming of Age" program is successful in bringing together youth and adults and officially welcoming youth into the church.

Submit Resolutions!

Youth Council 1989 will be considering all kinds of new resolutions and by-law amendments submitted by Youth Council Representatives and people like You! So, send resolutions and by-law amendments you would like considered to the Youth Office, 25 Beacon St. Boston, MA 02108. These should be postmarked by July 15 if you wish for them to be considered this year. Resolutions and by-law amendments received after July 15 will be considered next year.



Advisor's Page

LETTING GO

by Holly Jamison

"What will you do with no kids around next year?" Hearing that simple question was like being struck by a bolt of lightning. I decided last year to resign from my position of youth advisor at Countryside Unitarian-Universalist Church after 15 years of working with youth and being a YRUU advisor for the past seven. The decision is right, I know, but I'm finding it not easy because I'm now aware of how special the years, the kids, and the experiences have been. I am sharing this as a tribute to those at Countryside and to those advisors who alternately jump with joy and tear their hair out!

This time in a youth's life is filled with growing, questioning, searching, learning, joys and frustrations; we as youth advisors play a constant "guessing game", - when to step in, when to move back; when to lead, when to follow; when an individual is as important as the group, and when the integrity of the group may

mean sacrificing the rights of the individual. Looking back on my experience, one thought remains, "that the process is usually more important than the product." This was not easy for this goal-oriented leader to understand! These times are invaluable to youth in learning how to make decisions and develop leadership skills; it's when "ownership" happens. Even when it seems as if every gathering is as chaotic as a scene from "Animal House", the group is developing its culture. Facilitating this process is more complex than authoritatively determining an outcome or, at the other extreme, allowing youth to become hopelessly mired in inexperience.

I believe it takes a mixture of humor (essential for survival!), mentor, suggester, referee, friend and advocate—the most difficult aspect of this mix is that it is never the same, and frequently unpredictable! I have found that there is one factor that is reasonably constant: YRUUs are

bright, talented, independent and caring, and really do want to do things the best way they can. I think of this most of the time (I do not pretend this is a perfect world!), and I have seldom been disappointed.

These experiences have helped me develop a rich personal spirituality because YRUU encompasses so much of what I value in my spiritual being; individual growth, involvement in one's community and commitment to the global community, wonder about the unknown and an abiding comfort in the known, and an understanding of the uniqueness of UUism.

Will I miss running "The Jamison Home for Wayward Youth", phone calls at all hours from all locations from YRUUs across the country, New Year's Eve with 25 teenagers, 3 a.m. ski trips, car washes in 40 degree weather, laughter when I wear my orange rain coat, and dead silence

at an idea that I think could replace Einstein's theories? YES! But it is time for me to continue growing, changing, developing, and even growing up. Just as I hope I've helped my YRUU kids to move on, they have helped me to know when it is time for me to move on.

I would like to thank everyone at Countryside for enriching me. I would also like to thank my marvelous family for putting up with me, and actually making their own marks on the YRUU movement: Jeff, a member of YRUU Youth Council and Dean of Con-Con '89; Jon, who is President of our CMWD YAC; my husband and co-advisor, Ed, who's always there to pick up the loose ends and share my pride and joy. I love you all.

ATTENTION ADVISORS

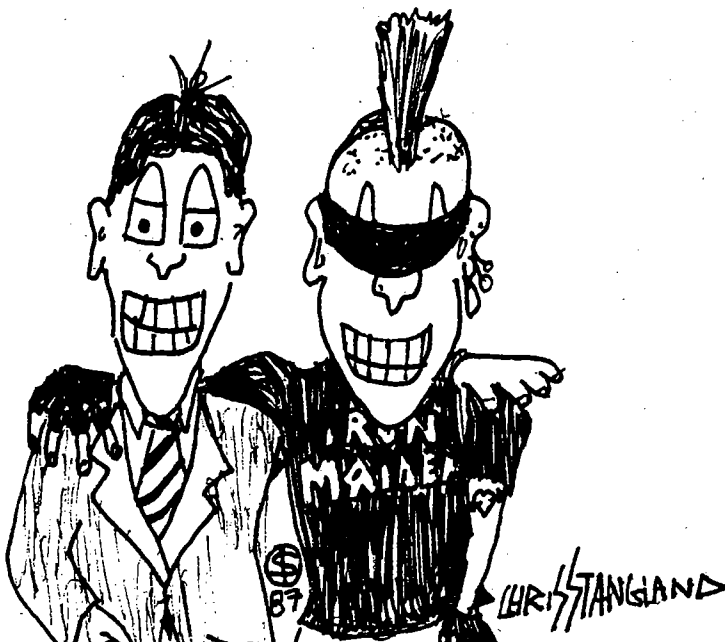
Are you programmatically frustrated by the short duration of most conferences, a time frame that usually prevents more ambitious efforts at impacting and empowering groups of youth?

Rowe Junior High Camp, in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts, is a THREE-WEEK experience with a very intentional and successful vision of intergenerational youth community ideals. In the next year or two, we may be looking for new co-directors. Should you be interested, best to visit a session in progress to get a sense of the operation.

This summer's camp runs from July 9-29. Call ahead for arrangements. Thanks.

Jaco B. ten Hove (Edmonds, WA)
206-778-1595
Mara Schoeny (Somerville, MA)
617-776-1360
Rowe Center, office 413-339-4216

Freindship Holds NO
Reservations.



Did you know that... the Florida District has a newsletter just for its advisors!

✂

YOU'VE GOT ME WRONG!

**DO WE HAVE YOUR RIGHT ADDRESS?
DO YOU STILL WANT SYNAPSE?
PLEASE HELP US UPDATE
OUR MAILING LIST**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone () _____

*Birthdate _____

☐ PLEASE REMOVE MY NAME

☐ PLEASE CHANGE MY ADDRESS

☐ PLEASE ADD MY NAME

☐ I AM AN ADVISOR

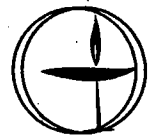
☐ PLEASE ADD THIS AS A COLLEGE ADDRESS (KEEPING MY OTHER ADDRESS FOR ALL SUMMER MAILINGS)

Mail To:
Synapse
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA
USA 02108-2800

There are are still spaces left for advisors at Con-Con!!!!



SOCIAL ACTION



Citizen Clout Counts

By Bob Alpern

Bob Alpern is the director of the U.U. Washington office, and coordinator of the annual National Workshop on Social Justice. Bob has given workshops at many Con-Cons, and will join us this year in Michigan.

A staunch opponent of Hitler's Third Reich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, wrote from his prison cell, in 1943, that "what really matters is whether those in power expect more from people's folly than from their wisdom and independence of mind." These words, of the Lutheran Pastor who was executed by his Nazi captors for an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Der Fuhrer, express the central dilemma of our time as well. Will people be so preoccupied with their personal pursuits that decisions on social, political, economic challenges which confront us are left to those in power or to special interest groups not concerned with the public interest?

When the people do not participate in the formulation of public policy, Congress and The White House act in a vacuum. Only when there is vigorous public debate of the issues, with an informed, thoughtful and active citizenry, will those in power act in the public interest. It is our responsibility to hold our members of Congress and The President accountable for their decisions.

The very fact that no more than 2% of the people ever communicate with their members of Congress points out the discrepancy between public opinion polls and public action. On major and controversial

matters it is more often the expressed power that influences member's voting than the polls. I have visited members of Congress who, when reminded of national opinion statistic, say, "well I am not hearing that from those who elected me."

Across the street from the U.S. Capitol, the UUA Washington Office seeks to speak truth to power from our grounding in justice, compassion and the transforming power of love. We see developing "citizen clout" and avoiding "citizen cop out" as central to our work in the nation's Capitol and with our UU grassroots across the country.

Priorities for our advocacy and educational/training work include: Preserving freedom of choice, supporting a comprehensive child care program, ending all U.S. aid to the Contras except for repatriation or relocation, supporting negotiations to end the conflicts in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and the Middle East, working for alternative U.S. policies in Central America and the Middle East, opposing apartheid by adopting comprehensive sanctions, achieving a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty, opposing Star Wars Defense Initiative, ending chemical weapons production and stockpiling and supporting a negotiated treaty to ban all such weapons, supporting US-USSR dialogue and cooperation, and supporting conscientious objector

option to draft registration.

In order to help people and their congregations move from study and talk to responsible social action we offer workshops, seminars and advocacy training sessions at UU district, cluster, summer institutes, camps and YRUU Con-Cons. One of the most exciting things we do is spend days exploring and sharing ideas on ways to end the arms race, to eliminate what Randy Newman calls the "Big-one" or how we can build bridges of understanding to reach toward peace with those called "enemies", and to get in touch with the struggles for human rights and economic, political and social justice in Central America, South Africa and the Middle East.

Each year in Washington we help organize the UU National Workshop on Social Justice. This event is a cooperative effort of UU social justice active organizations including YRUU. This is a time for YRUUs and adults to gather for two and one-half days of panels, speakers, workshops, worship, celebrations, witnessing and lobbying members of Congress. We gather about 115 to 125 UUs from 30 states to hear, question and meet members of Congress and national leaders of non-governmental activist organizations. This year four members of Congress shared their thoughts and ideas with participants that included 18 YRUUs.

Since nothing happens in

Washington just because it is good or right, but only when the people are giving voice (advocating) our office sends out periodic legislative action alerts and/or calls UUs in specific congressional districts or states when key votes are imminent. We welcome UUs to stop in to see us for help with briefings, orientations and making appointments with their Senators and Representative.

Did you know that there are 10 UU members of Congress? We are in contact with them and several are very interested in the work we do and are available to discuss concerns and questions we may have.

Another function of the office is to assist the UUA Administration and Moderator and involve them in significant events, press conferences, congressional breakfasts, etc. On April 9th in collaboration with the UUSC we invited all UU societies east of the Mississippi to come to Washington and join the March for Women's Rights and Freedom of Choice. An estimated 2000 UUs marched carrying their congregational and denominational banners, alongside the UUA's President Bill Schulz and it was a rousing, good-spirited, breezy day that concluded with a UU reception.

Please feel welcome to come to the UUA Washington Office, 100 Maryland Avenue, N.E. or give Chris Bailey or me a call at (202) 547-0254 if we can help you give voice to your concerns and aspirations for weaving a better world at home and abroad.

Happenings for Youth

International Religious Fellowship Conference: "Peace: Not As Difficult As It Seems!" July 22-28, 1989 in Poughkeepsie, NY, is an international conference which many UU youth attend each year. Contact Ann Yeomans: 78 South 1st Street #14, Brooklyn, NY 11211 for more details.

100th Anniversary of UU Youth Groups Conference: A 100th year anniversary conference is being planned for individuals who have been involved in any past UU Youth Groups. The conference will be at Mountain Lakes Park in North Salem, NY September 1-4, 1989. Contact Terry Franklin: P.O. Box 361 North Amherst, MA 01059 for details.

Volunteers For Peace: VFP is a Vermont non-profit organization which promotes International Workcamps in 36 countries. Contact VFP International Workcamps: 43 Tiffany Road Belmont, VT 05730 for more information.



The 10th Annual Youth Conference on Disarmament at the United Nations November 16-19, 1989

Sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office and Young Religious Unitarian Universalists.

The tenth annual UU Youth Conference on Disarmament will bring together approximately 25 Unitarian Universalist young people, ages 15 to 17, for three days of intensive learning and sharing about the issues of nuclear disarmament. This year's conference will concentrate on the United Nations' work towards disarmament, through presentations, tours, workshops and other activities. Participants will have an opportunity to meet like-minded young people, learn about the United Nations, and see disarmament from a global perspective. For more information and an application, contact the Youth Office: 25 Beacon St. Boston, MA 02108, (617) 742-2100.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON SOCIAL JUSTICE A SMASHING SUCCESS!

For the first time in several years, there was a noticeable (22 person) youth and young adult Caucus at the National Workshop! The Caucus met during the weekend to talk about the workshop and play new games, but they spent most of their time participating in the many workshops and lectures on social justice issues. On the last day of the workshop, the Caucus lobbied their senators and representatives using the facts they had learned over the weekend to help them push for social justice in their own states. The weekend was a smashing success, with many new friendships made, and a great deal of information given to the youth and young adults who will now bring it back to their home congregations and districts.

The youth and young adults in attendance (seen at the back of the photograph) were: Christopher Bailey (assistant in the UU Washington office), Colin Bird (UU Service Committee), Martha Decker, Matt Dewell, Tom Doyle, Ken Doyle, Jesse Epstein, Phyllis Franklin, Liz Frush, Ann Janak, John Kline, Catheryn Koss, Sara Lentz, Jennifer Martin, Jade Moran, John Reeves, Marin Ritter and Anne Sontheimer (NWSJ Planning Committee), Melanie Underwood, Joel Wagoner, Kate West, and Scott Wilhite.



The Green Party

by Julie Geanakakis, official *Synapse* reporter

"95% of the privately owned land in the United States is owned by 3% of the population" quotes Mitch Chanelis, spokesman and delegate of the Eastern Massachusetts Green Party, "...and the \$10 billion plus Rockefeller family fortune is greater than the net worth of all minority and poor white families combined". The Green Movement is a grassroots democratic and environmental organization lobbying for economic land reform and laws to preserve and protect the environment. Depending in which percentile you fall is bound to influence your political viewpoint. The Green Party offers an alternative between the right and left.

The Green Party has its roots in the German environmental party, *Die Grunen* and is branching out globally to champion causes for the ecological and human environment such as recycling of waste, developing sustainable energy sources such as solar power and arresting nuclear waste production, acid rain and the "greenhouse effect". The Green motto is "Think globally, act locally" with the goal of establishing a direct democracy with the vision "...of the people, by the people and for the people..."

The Green plan is to locate political power more at the community level in order to create a democracy which better serves its citizens. This approach is based on the equal right of all to the land and natural resources and the removal of taxes on labor. It calls for public or cooperative ownership of natural monopolies such as electric utilities and radio and television broadcast frequencies. Greens have used direct political action in Massachusetts to form a coalition against a Mass Burn Incinerator and formed the Boston Recyclers Against Incineration (BRAIN) which effectively turned Boston City Council members' opinion against the incineration of solid waste.

If you want to learn more about the Green Party, write to:

Youth Caucus
Green Committees Clearinghouse of
Correspondence
P.O. Box 30208
Kansas City, MO 64112
(816) 931-9366

PEACE CHILD

by Lucia Burns, Pacific
Northwest District

I died when the train pulled out. All of my friends around me were screaming and wailing from the pain. The friends who could not come with us were melting off into the distance. I was leaving Latvia, U.S.S.R., after one month, the best month of my life. I had been in "Peace Child", "Berni Par Miero" to the Latvians. We toured with the musical fantasy throughout the beautiful countryside.

"Peace Child" is a musical about young people who work together to achieve world peace. I don't know if our effort will bring peace to the world in the broader sense, but we achieved a peace between us that will always be there.

The 30 people who I spent July and August '88 with are some of the best people in the world. I will always remember the time we had together-working, playing, laughing and crying. In the story the U.S. and the U.S.S. R. kids met, became friends, left, called one another from across the sea and finally came back together again. Now life is imitating art: We did meet, become friends, leave each other, and have gotten together in groups to call Latvia.

Since our return from the Soviet Union the 15 of us from the U.S. have been working hard to bring our Latvian friends here. Right now, the chance that they will come is good, and if any of you are interested in seeing a physical piece of foof about peace, be at the airport when my friends land. The joy will be enough to melt even the coldest heart.

"Can't you just believe, that someone to share your feelings is on the other side of this beautiful planet? Say you love this world!"
-from Peace Child.



EXPRESSIONS

THE BEST OF YRUU POETRY

Beginning in June, 1989 the Youth Office will start collecting poetry, creative writing and graphics by Young Religious Unitarian Universalists. These will be compiled into a book which will be sold starting in the fall called "The Best of YRUU: Poetry, Creative Writing and Graphics by Young Religious Unitarian Universalists". So, if you want to see this book on the next NY Times bestseller list, your name in lights, and earn zillions of dollars in reprint royalties, **SEND YOUR POETRY, CREATIVE WRITING AND GRAPHICS TO THE YOUTH OFFICE!!**

AVAILABLE LIGHT by Jill Huebner, Jaxsonville, FL

Welcome to the new Available Light gallery of photography and surroundings for an Opening opening September 15th. It is a traditional Thursday festivity to see art, sometimes to be seen seeing art, talking about art and, of course, hors d'oeuvres and wine, usually white.

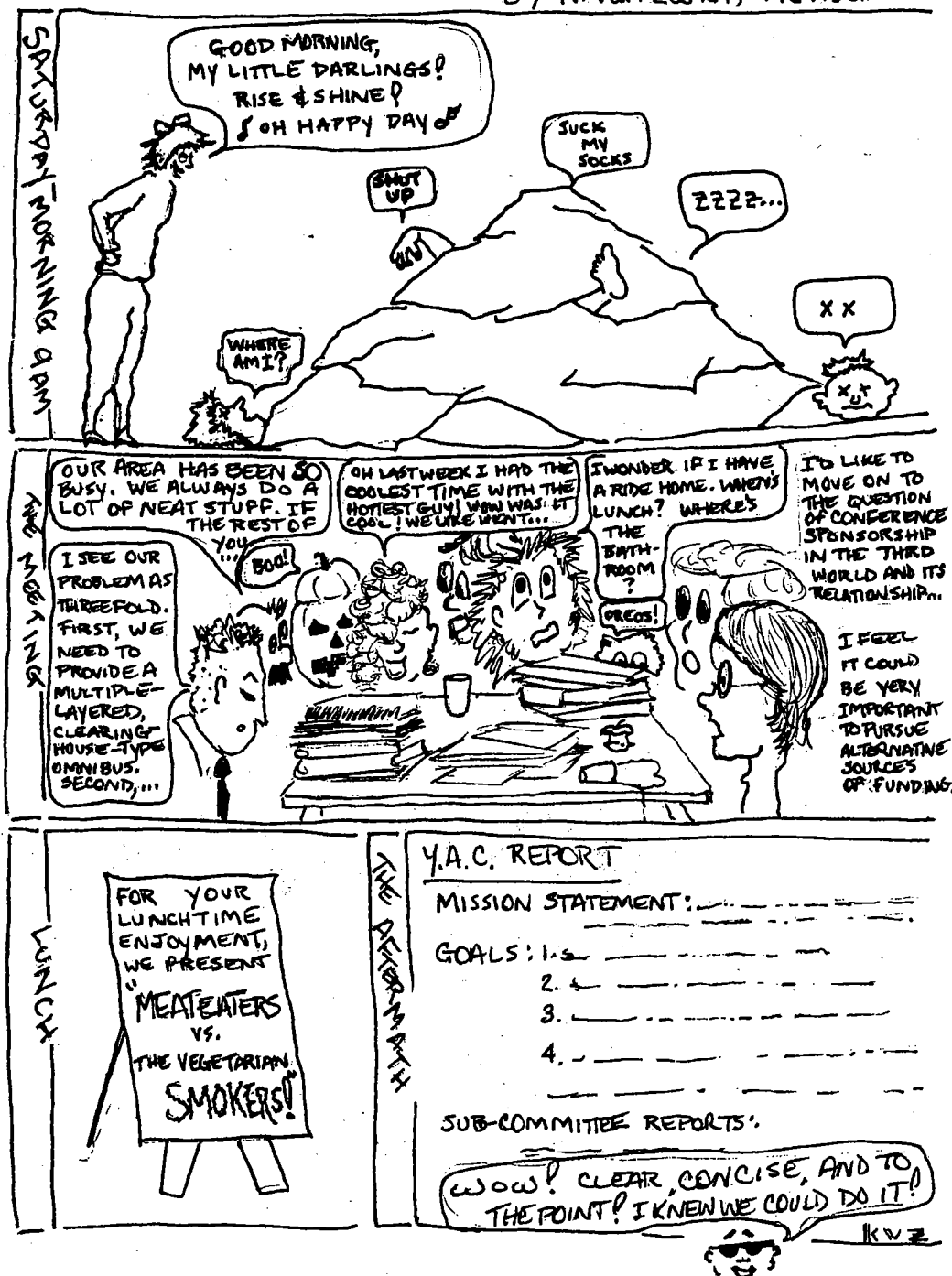
Is the parking lot a true barometer for any cultural event? Perhaps walking in the night air is a good prelude to center yourself on the approach and anticipate; to be separate and perhaps solitary before being enveloped. The people clustered outside the gallery must be escaping the overwhelming atmosphere that has heated the inside. Wine glasses in hand, they are unable to separate themselves from the incandescent window warmth and, afraid of losing their mood, they cling to the periphery of the energy.

From the door to the street the stark walls and intense track lighting of Available Light shine through the minglers from the far corner of the building. It's such a small space of white walls filled with people in dark clothes. At the threshold of Available Light, I sense the heat and the crowd are too intense to participate immediately. Every store in this subdivided space looks like it should be in the back, behind something else. Not even the ones in front behave like they are in front. Midnight Sun, the antique jewelry shop in the very back, comes the closest. Heartworks would easily slip to "junque shoppe" status if it weren't for the integrity of the individual works. It is full even without people. Susan Daley's glitter forest accompanies the solo electric guitar in the most successful blend of decorated sparkly T-shirts and grape vine wreaths with dried flowers, pinched between the intriguing food and the competitive rural antiques.

Yes, we will have some wine. It is a conscious decision. The warming wine fills my head swimming with the guitar chorus and now, later, I cannot separate them. Inside myself, I am afraid of conversation. I shall join the heat of Available Light at last. There is space. It is rather amazing, though, that in this limited well-lit space I do not feel large, as I had expected. I feel small. On professional white walls each artist's work hangs together, presenting a representative portrait of their vision. I enjoy seeing through each of their eyes. The guitar is very distant as my gaze moves around the room.

PORTRAIT of a Y.A.C. MEETING (or of any other generic UU-type youth-oriented work kind of a thing)

by K. Van Zandt, Advisor



I am unsure whether my job as an audience is to make comparisons with historical works and think to judge, or simply to take in the image and react on a more primitive level. It takes the whole solitary car ride home to leave this place.

FOOD

Food is worth a grain or smaller of salt found in the tear that runs down my face as I look in the mirror and continue to eat the delicious, but tasteless, important, but useless bite of wasted time I am always revolving my life around.

—Maggie Milne, Ft. Wayne, IN

Black Horse

Gallop parades sliding across these still floors of morning
Live inside them.
Black hair-
Calm as leather,
smooth as silk.
They linger slowly.
Nostrils open like doors.
The present excitement has not yet caught up to them.
Pressing forward only to stop again.
A quick scent drives eyes like vacuums into actions.
Still for a moment,
Drop heads
Quick
Lift up
the pause was only a moment.

—J. Phillips, St. Paul, MN

The Web of Love

Like the intricate web of the spider is love
The circles delicately formed
So easily the web is broken
The threads left to dangle forgotten in the breeze
The spider rebuilds the web and it again sways softly

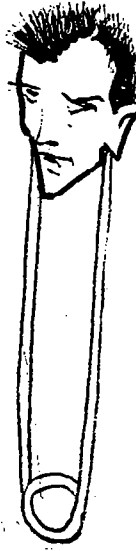
But again it may be broken by the gentle
swing of a human hand
So the spider moves to another place
As we move to another person
And slowly as the web is built
We will build a stronger relationship
But someday the threads will tear to
hang alone.

—Rebecca Sargent, Reading, MA

To a Friend

Your
cool
facade
really
is
attractive
but
it
is
shutting
me
out.

—Becky Hunt,
Portland, ME



The cool presence of the wind.
Whirling and diving; dancing; dividing; divine.
Throwing angry sand bits into my teeth and eyes.
Wet and anxious, waiting by the door,
in spring, for her.
The summer floods
through my window like a cleanly preened
lawn. Spreading its pollination into
and across the moving room's aura.
Spring in unseen cataclysms, moves
and vibrates. Wars and waves break
and shiver under the scurvy sky.
Motion and enhancements; Invocations.
Goin' of the city dozes in the
heavy summer midnight. Crush or rush
them. Those dancing girls in the
calm sifting chance of reason
Ocean boats—
Seaside floats—
Treason...

—Joseph Phillips

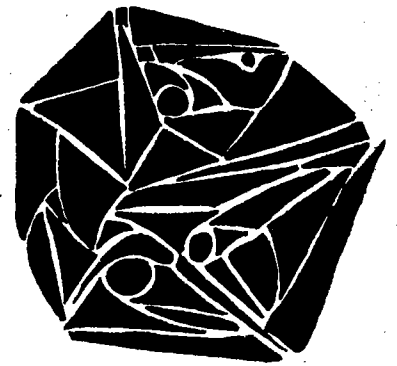
Pebbles

How can I—
a pebble
compete
with a rock?

Pebbles are ground
down to
a pulp when
they compete.

So why do they fight?
To show
they have
hope.

—Aphra Leach,
St. Catherines, Ont.



THIS CLOCK ISN'T FOR SALE

I fell asleep with the radio
on again. When I woke I found the garbage
men had already passed through
and the newspaper was wet from rain. I should have gotten up
earlier.

Someone once said the secret to staying young
is to watch

the sun rise every morning.
Now I watch too much TV, and the radio
fell into the sink yesterday. I didn't realize where garbage
came from. If you had asked me earlier
I would have said that I'd never be through
with this part of my life. Being young

is just like any other task, except when you're young
it seems like a full time job. If you watch
the cars reflected in the window while the radio
plays Vivaldi, the garbage
along the highway might disappear, and you might go through
to the other side of the camera. Fifteen minutes earlier

and the traffic would have been too thick. But two years earlier
I would have been too young
to even realize that it can be useful to stop and watch
the cars instead of turning up the radio
and chasing after them. I would have scorned the garbage
men and been through

three stop signs before the neighbors had taken five steps through
their front door. They were born earlier
than I was, and to them being young
means a lot of noise. The woman next door likes to watch
my visitors come and go while the radio
plays soft polka music. She sells her garbage

every year at the neighborhood yard sale—garbage
that was once a vital part of her life. As I was looking through
her record collection, she told me earlier
albums weren't for sale. These were from when she was young
when she was the one the neighbors would watch,
before her only comfort was the radio.

—Chauna Brocht, Baltimore, MD



Becky Peterson

Woman

Once there was a slice-of-moon woman
oh by the ruffle of hair on her neck
by the cool cue of her dashing poker
to zap this and that
do you good as new snowflakes on the hood of a car
or the impressionable porridge-palms of soft-souled folk

not that they haven't worked,
but that they were plum-fine
after it all;

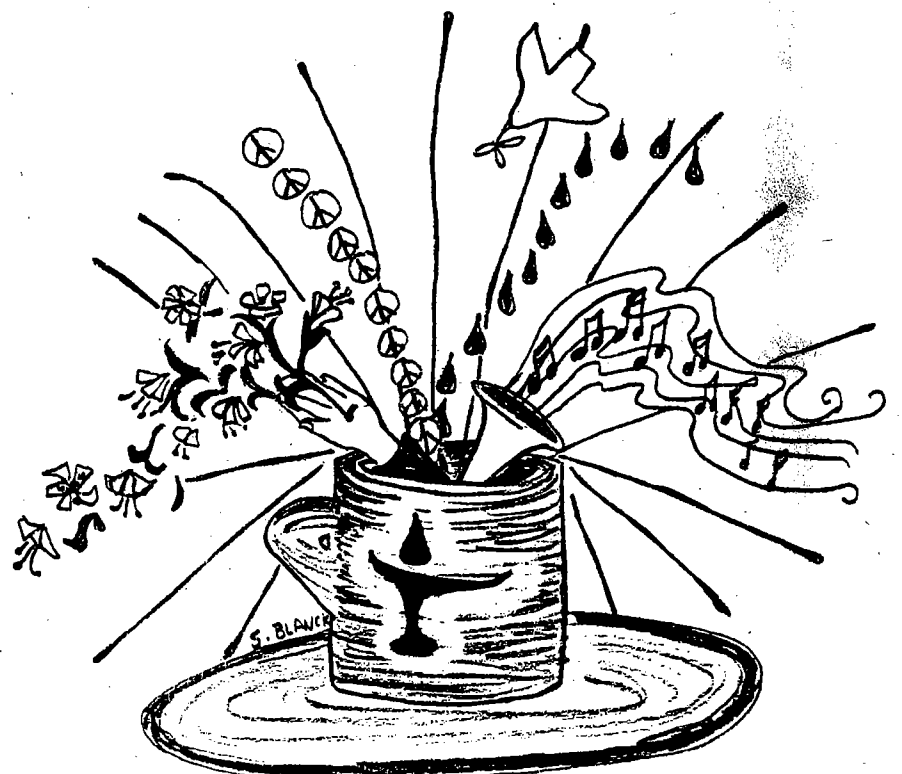
she has a breath like a peach on
a summer's breakfast setting

Once there was sparkle-spirit woman
and she carried quartz crystal like it was her one spark plug
in the heat
held me like a baby
that would not fall asleep

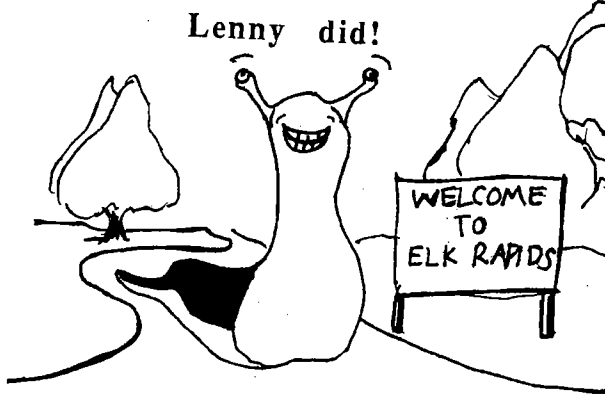
yes once she was
the days she reigned silver are not yet forgotten
she seeps out standing
white poinsettia under the daylight-blue Madonna

she emerges gentle
from the cobwebbed memory, turning circles in the afternoon.

—Natalie Hamm, Seattle, WA



Continental Conference Roots and Wings: YRUU's Traditions and Visions in Elk Rapids, Michigan August 21-27



Con-Con 1989 The Sequel Unleashed! Don't be a slug this summer, come to Con-Con.

Con-Con is the annual week-long camp for YRUUs. If you enjoy outdoor activities, workshops, spirituality, and making friends with almost 200 people from across the continent, Con-Con is for you! Call today! Limited spaces available. More information and registration forms can be obtained from the Youth Office, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108-2800. Phone: (617) 742-2100 ext. 350

Warning: the three-toed sloth is ahead in the race for a new YRUU mascot. All Con-Con registrants are urged to vote for a faster, more interesting mascot.

Young Adult Ministries Coordinator Half-Time

The UUA Department of Extension is seeking a half-time coordinator who will assist in the planning and administration of young-adult ministry programs and serve as a spokesperson for young-adult concerns in the UUA. Among her or his responsibilities will be:

- locating sites for Young Adult Ministries (YAMs) and coordinating site visits,
- administering and evaluating program grants for YAMs,
- developing and conducting leadership training programs,
- compiling and maintaining resource materials for young adult groups,
- and serving as liaison to the Young Adult Ministries Working Group.

Qualifications: Must be a committed Unitarian Universalist with extensive knowledge of our movement and demonstrated interest in young adult group work. Ideal: an entrepreneurial, pioneering, enthusiastic spirit combined with good organizational skills. Must be flexible and willing to travel. Also needed: good communications skills and ability to use a computer.

Application Deadline: August 1, 1989. Address applications to Robert L. Hill, Vice President, Extension and District Services, UUA, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108.

I SAVED SYNAPSE

"I wouldn't believe it if it didn't come right to my home."—Basil Kennedy.
"It's the best thing since guacamole on rye crisps."—Anonymous.
"Sometimes, at night, I like to lie awake and fantasize about the editors."—Teri Garr.

These are the words people are using to describe the hottest publication of our time: *Synapse*. Where else could you find such an honest example of youth culture in a newspaper: poetry about love, reflections on YRUU, political and social commentaries, district news, bad grammar, zany graphics, support for advisors, local youth group ideas, and the low down on continental events? "Almost anywhere?" No, *Synapse* is a one of a kind publication, and you know it.

Although *Synapse* has been coming to us (all 10,500 of us on the mailing list) for years, we might be seeing fewer issues. Why? This is the official word. Originally, *Synapse* was to be published 3 times a year; and the UUA was supposed to fund it. But, things change. The next bright faced YRUUer to open his or her mail box may find... nothing, just dark, empty, cold space. Over the course of the years the UUA has seen financial troubles which affect the production of *Synapse*. Currently, we don't even have enough to publish this issue. There is hope, however. We are accepting donations. You can become a Friend (\$1-\$5), Patron (\$6-\$20), Benefactor (\$21-\$50) or Super-Duper-Happy-Synapse Celebrity (\$51-a zillion dollars) in the *I Saved Synapse* campaign.

This is a fundraising campaign to insure that *Synapse* will continue to come to your home at least three times a year. Anyone can make a donation. All donations received will be used strictly to pay for the production of *Synapse*. Checks may be made payable to YRUU, with a memo designating that it is for *I Saved Synapse*. Any contributions are appreciated. Contributors will be listed in next issue, unless we are otherwise advised.

As a special bonus, you will find a handy little coupon—evaluation form below. Please fill out the convenient form, enclose a check or money order, clip the coupon, and send it to your friendly Youth Office, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108-2800.

It's the I SAVED SYNAPSE COUPON

I, _____ would like to see *Synapse* continue to be published. I support its future existence by giving this contribution in the name of *I Saved Synapse*.

Enclosed are answers to the evaluation questions below. I mean, hey, since I as a reader of *Synapse*, am partly responsible for its content, I will give the editors some really handy evaluation material with which to work.

- 1) My favorite sections of *Synapse* are—
- 2) Overall, I rate the content of *Synapse*— 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 3) I would like to see more articles about—
- 4) What could be improved?

THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!

Big Wig Shin Dig BY PARISA PARSIA, SC member

Question: where can you find a guy who looks like Santa Claus, a budding politician, a doctor, an ex-body builder, a really sensitive guy, a *Synapse* cover artist, a leftist Abraham Lincoln look-alike, a closet opera star, a new kid on the block, two overworked Bostonians, and a confused college student?

Answer: at Picket House, the UUA motel, for three and a half fun-filled days and late nights of—you guessed it—The Spring Continental YRUU Steering Committee Meeting.

From April 27 to 30, while magnolias bloomed, and children made way for ducklings on the Boston Commons, the Steering Committee managed to pour over the Five Year Report, select the new YRUU Programs Specialist and the new at-large representatives to Youth Council, think up sneaky ways to fund leadership development conferences in districts, organize workshops for Youth Council, apply the finishing touches to Con-Con, rank the needs of districts in trouble, (pant, pant) and, yes, we even almost slept. —And we even cooked our own meals.

Just like district Youth Adult Committees, the Continental Steering Committee labored over difficult issues—age range, accountability, responsibility—and policies that may ultimately affect the structure of continental YRUU. The success of the meeting, like the weight of the topics, can be measured in tons. As fatigued (and smelly) as we were, we looked back over the weekend with a smile of accomplishment.

The Steering Committee welcomes any suggestions or comments from YRUU members across the continent.

Well, that's all for today folks. BYE BYE!!!



Love, Jason, Anne and Julie.