

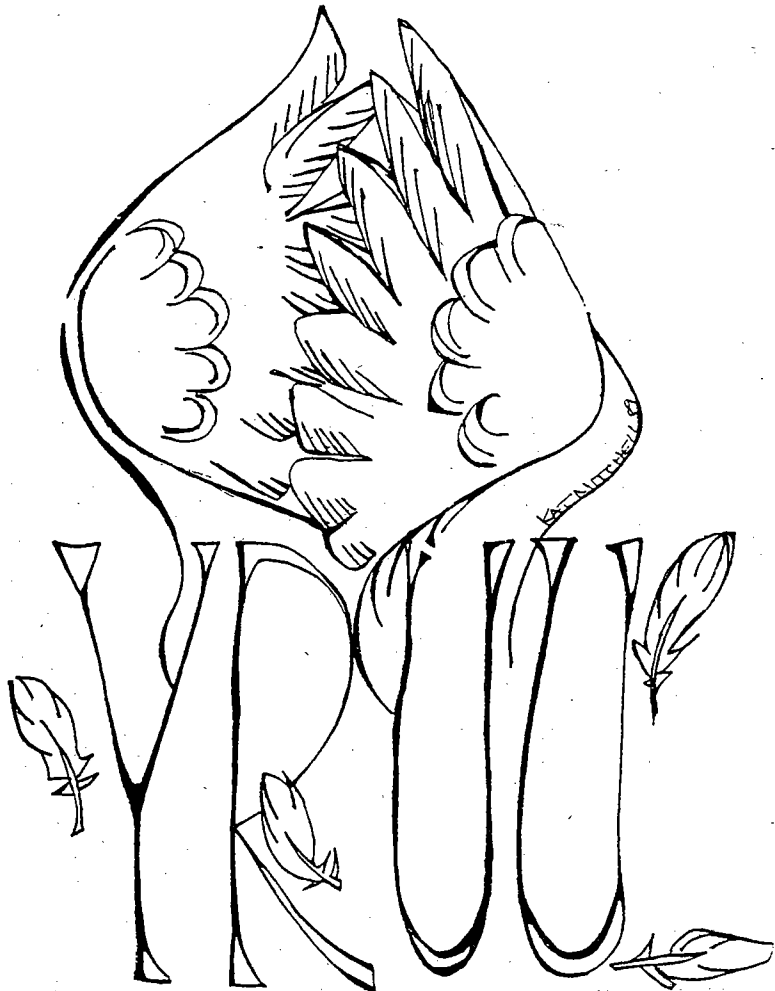
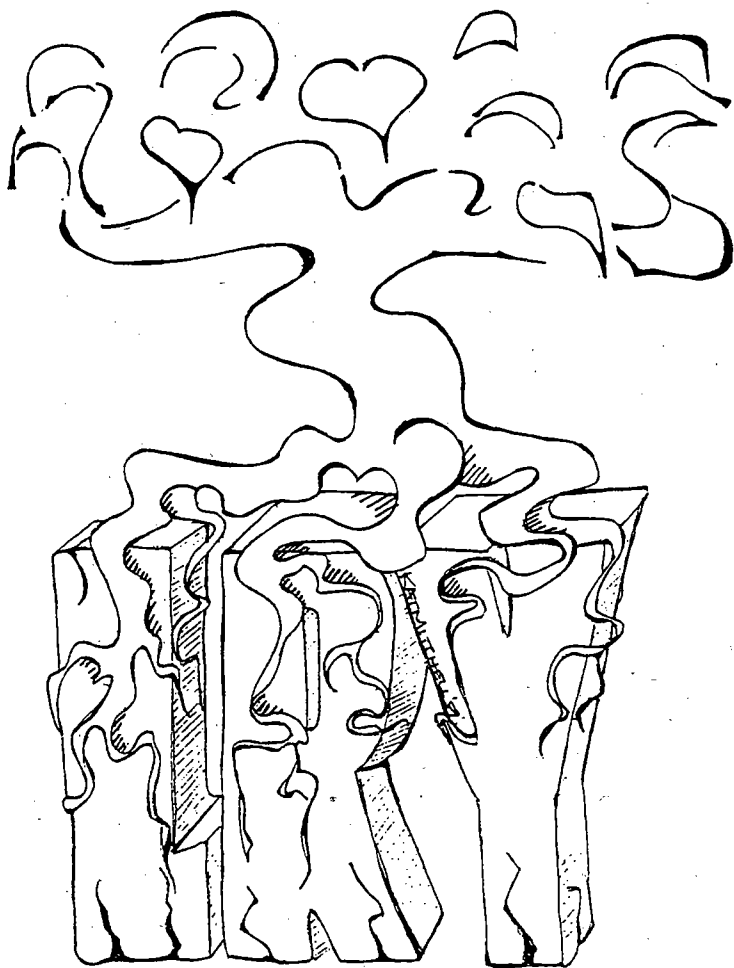
A Point of
Contact
Where

Synapse

Printed in the United States of America Volume VII, Issue 3, Fall/Winter 1989

Energy and
Information are
Exchanged

Roots and Wings: ***YRUU's History Traditions and Visions***



Instructions

1. Cut the label out.
2. Send the label in to the:
YRUU YOUTH OFFICE
25 BEACON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02108-2800

***IF YOU DON'T
MAIL YOUR MAIL-
ING LABEL BACK TO
US, YOUR NAME
WILL BE REMOVED
FROM OUR MAIL-
ING LIST!***

YRUU is seven years old and so is the Synapse Mailing List. In this year of reflection and renewal, the Youth Council felt that the time had come to update our 10, 500 person mailing list.

THE GREAT SYNAPSE MAILING LIST PURGE

I want to receive
information
about:

- ☐ BLACK CONCERNS
- ☐ CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL
- ☐ UU WOMEN'S FEDERATION
- ☐ LESBIAN AND GAY CONCERNS
- ☐ YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS (18-35)

**YES! I WANT TO CONTINUE
TO RECEIVE SYNAPSE**



UNITARIAN
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OF CONGREGATIONS
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Boston, MA 02108-2800
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Permit No. 8652

Please make any necessary address corrections to the label.

YOUTH COUNCIL VOTES TO CHANGE YRUU's AGE RANGE

After careful consideration of documents such as the Five Year Review Report, and testimonies by youth and adults from each district, the 1989 Youth Council voted to change the YRUU age range, from the current 12-22, to 14 to 20 in 1991 providing that the following conditions are met.

for Junior High:

1. There is a Junior High Programs Director established within the UUA.
2. The programs developed focus on the ages of 11-14.
3. Enjoyable programs for the age range of 11-14 are available in each district.

4. There are programs and support to develop leaders and advisors for this age range.

5. That the transition programs be in effect between the age groups of 11-14 and YRUU.

6. Youth Council 1991 certifies that conditions 1 through 5 have been met.

for Post High:

1. The Young Adult Ministry office of the UUA is functioning and effective.

2. UUYAN and YRUU have developed and implemented a transition program.

3. Youth Council 1991 certifies that conditions 1 and 2 have been

fulfilled.

If these conditions are not met, the resolutions will not pass and the next move will be in hands of the Youth Council.

1989 Youth Council Resolutions

Youth Council, the governing body of YRUU, met August 17-20 to discuss, debate and create resolutions directing the future of YRUU. Many monumental resolutions were passed on issues such as: making leadership development the primary focus of YRUU, asking for youth to be granted voting privileges on their district adult boards, making the minimum age for YRUU advisors 25 years of age, creating a new code of principles for behavior for continental YRUU, welcoming non-North American (including Canadian) UU youth into YRUU, and purging the mailing list of *Synapse*. More information about these resolutions may be obtained from your district Youth Council Representative or the YRUU Youth Office at the UUA.

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YRUU Wings

Sex Flash

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Poetry

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Some of the General Assembly '89 Youth Caucus gang

1989 Youth Caucus at General Assembly

by KATHLEEN EGAN, Franklin, MA

General Assembly. Thousands of Unitarian Universalists, just like myself, congregated in one place all wanting to make changes to better our world. It definitely brings goosebumps to my skin! It was a wonderful experience understanding the business behind the religion. Through General Assembly, I came to realize that a strong, working religion does not just happen out of thin air. Hard working individuals and groups make a religious organization functional.

As part of the Youth Caucus, I was able to meet with other youth to discuss and voice my opinion, on the issues which were presented in the plenary sessions. The Youth Caucus chose to support the resolution on "Equal Opportunity in Ministerial Settlement" which demonstrated to the other delegates that youth are concerned about is-

ues which affect our denomination as a whole. The Youth Caucus also proposed an amendment to a resolution which was being debated on the floor which was adopted. It dealt with changing the title of the resolution "Protecting the Ecosystem" to "Protecting the Biosphere." An ecosystem is only one small part of our large biosphere and the writers of the resolution wanted to protect everything on our precious world, as opposed to pieces of it.

When the youth spoke at General Assembly, the adults really listened. Many adults came up to me saying how wonderful they thought it was that youth were taking part in the General Assembly. We are the future leaders of Unitarian Universalism. Taking the opportunity to test our wings will be an advantage in the future, as we work to better both our world and our religion.

UU-UNO Disarmament Conference Statement

War is murder, of the animals and trees and life force. It's a rape of mother earth.

Once life and beauty are gone they are gone forever.

We want to live in a world without daily fear of death and destruction.

We love life, it is something we can't afford to blow away.

The social, economic, and environmental benefits of disarmament would be the most incredible this world has yet seen.

Disarmament is a basic step that

must be taken to ensure a life worth living.

We hope our children will have a world to live on. We wish everyone could learn to resolve their conflicts through talking and sharing their feelings.

We want to live. We want our children to live. We want their children to live.

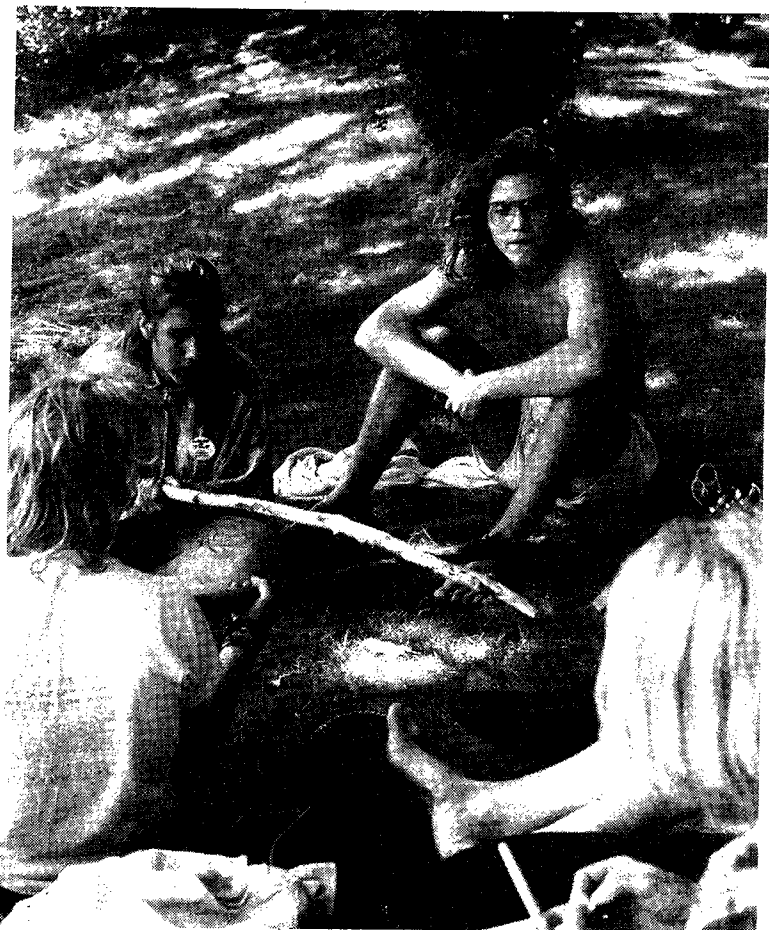
We would like for our children to be born without the invisible weight of the nuclear threat on them.

We would like a future.



Participants at the UU-United Nations Office Youth Disarmament Conference, Nov. 16-19, atop the Empire State Building in New York. Left to Right: Anne Sontheimer, Vanessa Wilcox, Nick Cofod, Leela Sinha, Jon Lau, Megan Cairns, Alex Smith, and Ian Slingerland. Staff Photo.

"Sound the Chorus of Faith" and be a part of Youth Caucus at General Assembly in Milwaukee, WI, June 21-26, 1990



Julie Rising and Julian Lauzzana at Con-Con 89's Story Stick Workshop.
Photo by Kat Mitchell.



The 1989/90 YRUU Steering Committee

Erv Miller, Christina Branum, Tom Doyle, Meg Riley, Roger Hollon, Graham Smith, Jamey Montgomery, Sean Ramsey, Rebecca Scott, Anne Sontheimer, Julie Rising.
Photo by Paula Gilbertson.

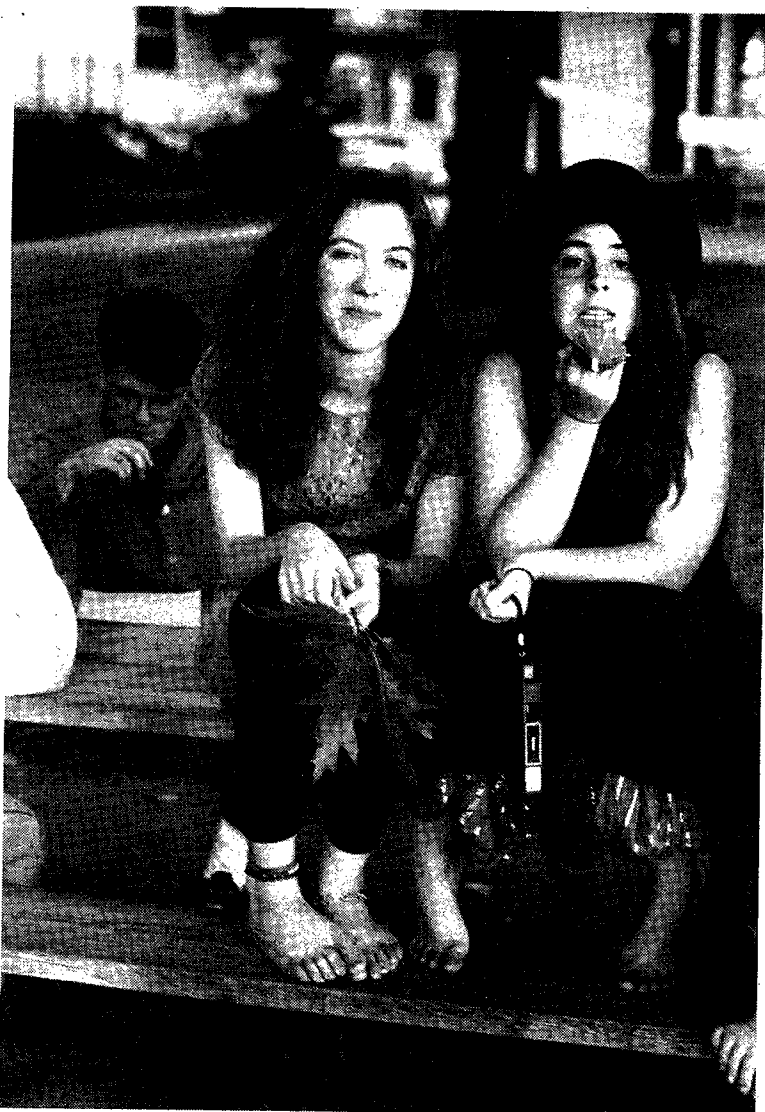
Reflections on a Con-Con Unattended

by **KIRA KOPLOS**, Claremont, CA

Mbae! Con-Con '89 would have been my sixth Con-Con. I don't know how many people can say that, (except Stefan Adler and Tony Donatelli), but I'm sure the number is few. There are, of course, people who have returned to Con-Con a few years in a row but have now, for one reason or another, stopped going. There are also people who have attended only once, but the week remains a special time for them. I have seen Con-Con affect many different people in a number of ways and I've come to understand that the week means something and does something for every single person who attends. Why else would they keep coming back?

For me, Con-Con was my only source of YRUU. I would go spend a week sharing, hugging, foofing, making friends, and simply enjoying being at a conference. Then I would go back out into the real world and wait for the next one to come around. Con-Con was my source of energy, renewal, a point from which I could do anything and go anywhere. Coming at the end of the summer, it was a "finishing" of my summer's thoughts and a way to prepare for the next year.

Con-Con was not only a time of "spiritual" renewal and growth, however, it was also a source of memories. These range from universal memories of "Hankenstein," the love feast, "Circle Games", the Flam, and the hunt for Tony's killer, to more personal memories of quick talks with friends in the bathrooms in Oregon, staying up all the last night and watching the sun rise (or not watching as the case may be), abandoned cabins and spending an hour talking and discovering with a friend by the lake in Oklahoma. I'm sure everyone who has been to a conference knows the feelings I am talking about and the sense of loss (commonly known as Post Con-Con Blues) at having to give it all up and go back out into the real world.



Jay Dolen, Eliza Johnson and Carrie Cordeiro at Con-Con '89.
Photo by Kat Mitchell

I guess, in a way, what Con-Con started out giving me and what brought me back each year is the reason why now I can say "I don't have to go, I can survive without it". Con-Con began by giving me strength and energy to renew and live and has ultimately taught me how to achieve these things within myself. While I would have dearly loved to have been at Con-Con '89 to see all my old friends again and experience the peace that it brings me, the fact that I can now find the peace within myself is the reason I do not have to go back. Since I have found this "Con-Con spirit" within me, I can explore and experience all of life more fully and

lovingly as I do at Con-Con. Remembering the lessons I have learned and feelings I have felt, I am going out on my own, and sharing with others like everyone who has ever attended Con-Con has shared with me.

People who have been to Con-Con can, I hope, understand what I am saying. They too have experienced the traditions - the auction, banquet, dance and worships - and have made their own memories from them. And they too will use their wings to fly from Con-Con and spread it, in their own way, to others. To everyone from The Mountain, to Portland, Canada and beyond, best of luck, Mbae, Namaste and remember, in the immortal words of the Beatles (and Con-Con '86)

*There are places I'll remember all my life
Though some have changed
Some forever, not for better
Some have gone, and some remain
All these places have their moments
With lovers and friends I still can recall
Some are dead and some are living
In my life, I loved them all.*

Con-Con is one of those places.
Feedletwop.

Con-Con '90

WILL BE AT THE UU CAMP, "THE MOUNTAIN," IN NORTH CAROLINA, AUGUST 18TH -24TH.

THE THEME IS "CHANGES: THE CHILD WITHIN."

WRITE TO THE YOUTH OFFICE AT 25 BEACON ST., BOSTON, MA, 02108 FOR A REGISTRATION FORM.

Letters to the Editors

The Letters to the Editors page is here so that you can voice your opinions and concerns. Let us know what's going on in your youth group, what you like about YRUU, *Synapse*, or anything else! Write us at The Youth Office, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108.

Dear Editors:

Is there life after YRUU? It was not long ago that there were no young adult programs and older UU youth were asking themselves this question.

As the Facilitator of C*UUYAN (Continental UU Young Adult Network), I am writing to assure you that there is indeed life after YRUU. C*UUYAN welcomes UU youth and looks forward to their contribution in building for the future. So much of the sense of community, spirituality, and leadership skills that youth develop in YRUU are needed in C*UUYAN. This need is especially great right now because C*UUYAN is still being established. Unlike YRUU, C*UUYAN is a grassroots organization, which means it is not directed by the UUA and not as formally structured. C*UUYAN exists because UU young adults make it happen. So my message is this, "we want you to be a part of our growing community and we very much need you to help develop that community."

Already YRUU has played an important role in increasing the awareness of young adult needs. And, it can be credited with much of the impetus for a renewed focus on young adults within the UUA. However, as YRUU recognizes the existence of C*UUYAN and contemplates changing its age limit, it is essential that YRUU not divorce itself from young adult concerns. There are important issues which both organizations need to work on together. These include:

1. Preparing youth for the transition from YRUU to C*UUYAN

2. Starting and maintaining campus ministry
3. UUA commitment to young adult staff support and programming.

Unfortunately, campus ministry, which is of particular concern to many YRUUs, is a very weak area of young adult ministry. We need to educate youth on how to start campus groups and get a greater commitment from the UUA to support campus ministry in the long term. (see associated advertisement).

Because the UUA has been faced with significant budget constraints in the last couple of years, commitment to support a full time young adult staff member has been delayed and still remains somewhat tentative. We cannot assume that the UUA will maintain commitment to our staffing and programming needs if we do not continue to advocate for them.

I feel very strongly that C*UUYAN and YRUU need to work hand-in-hand on these and related issues in order to ensure that we do not have youth falling between the cracks. I suggest that we work hard to:

1. Keep a continuous dialogue going (possibly using *Synapse*)
2. Ensure that there is a liaison in place within both organizations
3. Develop workshops for informing and energizing our youth about C*UUYAN and life after YRUU.

Not having grown up as a UU, I can only sense what the YRUU experience must be like. But what I do know is that

I have been consistently impressed with the enthusiasm and maturity of YRUUs. I look forward to what a strong bond between our two organizations will bring.

In the Spirit,

Julie Shryne
C*UUYAN Facilitator

.....

Dear Editors:

In your latest issue of *Synapse*, you published a statement about our youth group that is completely untrue. We feel that you should make more of an effort to research your stories. The statement about our group, stating "The Boulder Group is nonexistent after the "removal" of their advisor on charges of sexual abuse", is potentially harmful to the reputation of our group, and slanderous to all our advisors.

We believe, in addition to publishing our letter, that you should publish a formal public apology.

WE ARE NOT DEFUNCT. We still meet on a regular basis. There is no history of sexual abuse by advisors of our group. We hope we have set you straight with the truth.

Sincerely,

Boulder U.U. Church YRUU

see page 9

Environmentally Aware Conference Planning by Jill C. Cabe, Kent, OH

Planning a conference involves lots of time, energy and arguing. But in UU circles, one thing most everyone agrees on is the preservation of the environment. When you are planning your conference, take care to insure that this gathering of socially concerned, budding activists does not contribute to the problem of pollution, but rather works to create awareness about solving it.

Shop carefully for the conference because what you buy will directly affect the area you stay in. Instead of plastic two liter bottles of pop, buy recyclable aluminum cans. If they come in six-packs held together by those looped plastic rings, cut up the loops so no errant wildlife chokes to death at the local landfill. Or drink tea (just as chock full of caffeine as you could wish), lemonade or fruit punch.

Whatever sugar water you pick be sure not to drink it out of styrofoam. The stuff just doesn't go away, so don't buy it, ever. Also avoid styrofoam dishes. Most churches, if that's where your conference is going to be, have dishes and silverware. Before you arrive, ask permission to use these things and thereby avoid buying plastic utensils as well. If you do buy plastic forks, etc., wash them and reuse them.

When shopping for food, don't buy plastic milk jugs or styrofoam egg cartons. If the first grocery store you go to doesn't have cardboard, tell the manager why you are going to buy your ten dozen eggs and twelve gallons of milk somewhere else and not at his/her crummy store. Before cooking the food, see if composting is feasible. Maybe the church has a garden. Maybe someone nearby does.

All this may sound like extra work just when you want to be having fun. However, it mostly means a couple extra trash cans around to sort stuff as you throw it out and a run to the local recycling center. A good way to thank the church or facility whose dishes and space you use might be for every conference-goer to bring a can of food as part of the registration fee and donate the food to the local soup kitchen.

While not all these suggestions may apply to your situation, please keep the environment, and the amount of trash all of you will generate in mind as you plan. Individually, and especially when we come together as UU's, we need to be a part of the solution of the environmental crisis and less of the cause.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

(18 - 35 years)

Grants

Money available to develop young adult ministries in your congregation or local campus:

- for start-up costs (up to \$500)
- for major projects (up to \$5000)

.....

For further information,
please contact:

The Rev. Terasa Cooley,
Young Adult Ministries
Coordinator

Unitarian Universalist Assoc.
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108

(617) 742-2100

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.

YRUU Staff- Anne Sontheimer, Rebecca Scott, Meg Riley, and Julie Geanakakis

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.

Submissions Policy—Each submission must have name and address attached. Multiple submissions accepted. However, there is a limit of two personals, each of a maximum of 50 words, per issue. 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: April 1, 1990

Give the
Flaming Chalice
this year . . .



Gold, silver, pewter
Necklaces, pins,
pendants & ornaments

Write or call:

617-742-2100

CLF/Jewelry
25 Beacon Street
Boston MA 02108

On Raising Your Pro-Choice Voice: Why You And Why NOW

Social Action News

by Coleen Murphy

Today was a big day at the National Organization for Women's Washington, D.C. headquarters. It was my first day there as a full time volunteer, and I was immediately given lots to do. First, I attempted to contact every college student in the D.C. area, that I know, to see if they would be available to help next weekend when "Operation Rescue" comes to town for one of their routine attempts at blocking the entrance to the local Women's Health Clinic. Later, I called over 50 different organizations to gather co-sponsors for the Mobilization for Women's Lives, the upcoming rally that will be one of the largest pro-choice events of all time. I have come here specifically for the purpose of defending every woman's reproductive rights, and that makes me proud. I will be living in this cold, Northern city for the next month, and that makes me tired.

The Mobilization is scheduled for November 12, and by the time you read this it will be several weeks in

the past. Many of you will have been there. Maybe it will have touched you so deeply that you are now a full time pro-choice activist. Maybe you will have brought all of your friends, relatives and acquaintances to be part of the Mobilization, and maybe they have all become full time pro-choice activists. Maybe the energy in our nation's capitol will have been so strong on that day that by now George Bush has said on network television, "Gosh, I've been wrong all this time! It seems every woman does deserve a choice!" Maybe, but not likely, which means that there is still a great deal of work to be done, and maybe I can help you get started.

The first step is learning that it's okay to call yourself a pro-choice activist. Neither "pro" nor "choice" are dirty words, and together they stand for something vitally important to womankind. You must know ahead of time, though, that you will be called other names, such as pro-abortion, pro-death, baby killer, and

bra burning commie, to name a few. Eventually, one learns to shrug these titles off. We are pro-choice and we know what it means. Most of us have never experienced abortion, and a few of us would be morally and/or emotionally opposed to having one ourselves, but all of us believe that it is a woman's inalienable right to control her own body, including the contents of her womb. Never again do we want to see or hear of desperate women dying of complications from illegal and unsafe abortions. Our position is as simple as that.

You can accomplish a lot by writing a few letters. Even if your state legislature doesn't have abortion on their agenda yet, you need to get in touch with them right away and let them know how you feel. A good letter is very easy to put together, just keep it short and to the point, and send a copy of it to your local paper. Yes, males need to write too. You can find the names, addresses and phone numbers of all of your

elected officials in the Government section of your phone book. If you don't do letters, call your legislators. Every little bit helps.

Next, you need to join an organization. There are many pro-choice groups, some frontrunners being: N.O.W., National Abortion Rights Action League, Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights and Women's Political Caucus. You can call your local Chamber of Commerce for a listing of organizations in your area. Also, if you attend a UU society, ask the minister or president for information. UUs have come out as the most strongly pro-choice denomination in the nation! Joining an organization gives you an instant support group; we're all in this together!

Do as much as you can. Talk to your friends, organize a few meetings, vigils, rallies, whatever. Do it for yourself, your mothers, your sisters, your friends, and the future generations.



Photos are from left to right:

Anne Sontheimer and Rebecca Scott
(your Synapse reporters) with Pete Seeger!

The youth delegation from the Washington D.C. area carrying the official YRUU and UUA banners.



Coleen Murphy and Eleanor Smeal,
President of the Fund for the Feminist Majority.



YOUTH STAFF HIT THE ROAD

On October 22, 1989, at the initiative of the Youth Programs Specialists, the YRUU Steering Committee voted to co-sponsor the National Organization For Women's Mobilization for Choice. Anne Sontheimer and Rebecca Scott, your friendly Youth Programs Specialists, quickly spread the news and prepared to attend the rally. On November 11, we sped down the turnpike, (with YRUU and UUA banners in hand and singing Indigo Girls songs), to Washington, D.C., where we met up with Coleen Murphy, NOW Volunteer and YRUU legend. Coleen had coordinated with local YRUU youth groups to meet us at the rally. So, on November 12, YRUU youth, Coleen, Rebecca and Anne, (with press passes saying "Official Synapse Reporters"), marched on Washington to rally for Choice!

LRY REUNION

STAR ISLAND, N.H.

SEPTEMBER 7 - 9, 1990

NEW ENGLAND CLASSES 1960 - 1970

REMEMBER STAR ISLAND, FERRY BEACH, MID-WINTER, ROWE, SPRINGTHINK !
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED PLEASE CALL or WRITE WITH ANY OLD DIRECTORIES
or NEW NAMES AND ADDRESSES, etc.

TOPHY WOODWARD
6 SEAVIEW DRIVE
PLYMOUTH, MA 02360

REUNION CHAIRPERSON
508-747-3775 mon - sat 10-9
508-224-4661 anytime

Churches, thank you for posting this notice in your newsletters

I Remember:

by **LAILA IBRAHIM,**
Former Youth Staff,
Oakland, CA

In February, 1980, I attended my first LRY conference in Cambria, California. I was involved in LRY, and then YRUU, for the next five years. It was the most transformative experience of my life. I wouldn't be living the life I am if I hadn't been involved in UU youth-work. The following are recollections of some of my LRY and YRUU experiences from those years, and in the years since, when I have done work with YRUU.

I remember:

- Being raised a devout atheist and knowing that there was no religion that could embrace me and my views.

- Saying, "Sure, I'll go to a conference" thinking it was to baby-sit and being too embarrassed to back out of it when I realized it was a conference for me.

- Feeling as if I had come home when I attended my first conference. Being scared and thrilled by the love and intensity, and knowing that I had finally found people who were like me.

- Trying to explain to my school friends that their "atheist" friend did indeed go to church every Sunday, and that I was still not a Christian.

- Discovering that in order for a unified continental youth organization to be created, some fundamental changes would need to happen within LRY.

- Going to this huge conference that was going to happen in Minnesota with UU youth from around the country with the purpose of coming to consensus about the changes needed to make a unified continental youth organization.

- Swearing that I would never do anything on the continental level again because "those people" from the east coast didn't know anything about community or truly understand the spirit of LRY.

- Attending another continental event because my church paid for it and having THE TIME of my life. Meeting the most wonderful, caring people from around the continent and knowing I had to keep being involved in continental activities.

- Being amazed that I was elected to the interim Steering Committee and that I would be flying out to Boston for meetings.

- Going to India and realizing that our religious movement was not limited to this continent.

- Moving to Boston to work in the Youth Office of the Unitarian Universalist Association and living at Scenic Overlook. Fluctuating between feeling like the official YRUU doormat and the YRUU heartbeat.

- Reviewing YRUU during its sixth year of life and being thrilled to know that it is strong and the tradition goes on.

- Being honoured to be asked to share my sense of YRUU's roots and vision at the Continental Conference.

- Knowing that YRUU continues to feed and challenge its members.

R

YRUU's History

The Ball

by **REV. WAYNE ARNASON,**
Minister, Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church, Charlottesville, VA

Imagine, if you will, a science-fiction scenario of some future time: The information overload that has become so much a part of our present-day lives has increased to unbearable proportions. Psychiatrists and neurologists working in collaboration realize that there is a great deal of mental illness brought on by the sheer weight of information accumulating in our memories. In a great breakthrough for mental health, scientists figure out a way to wipe human memory clean of all accumulation deemed unnecessary for present time functioning. Legislation is passed that requires each person in the country to go in for a mandatory "memwipe" each year.

Knowledge of basic family and work relationships, certain personality characteristics and necessary work skills are left intact, but the knowledge of how you got to where you are, your family and your national background, your awareness of the broader world around you, and the ways in which your life is interrelated to everyone else's on the planet, is gone. You live in the present time alone. Sounds awful, doesn't it?

Yet this is exactly the scenario that YRUU as an institution has to fight each and every year as it goes through a turnover in its leadership and constituency. If you have been aware of and involved in YRUU beyond the local group level for five years, you are a senior citizen in this community. In that five year period you have seen the constituency of the youth groups that YRUU serves change completely, and the new people that have come in know almost nothing of why YRUU does things the way it does and how it got to where it is now.

A clean slate has its advantages and its disadvantages. History can be a burden. Innovation in human affairs rarely comes from reading about the past. The creativity that invites the new and the fresh more frequently comes from eyes that see the world in ways it has never been seen before. On the other hand, much wheel spinning among us results from the mistaken convictions that what is happening in the present has never happened before, and that the frontiers of our personal experience have never been explored by others who can

Roots and Branches:

A Personal Planting with a 1940's Perspective

by **REV. LEON C. HOPPER,**
Minister, East Shore Unitarian Church, Bellevue, WA

During my growing up years in the PNWD, Unitarian churches were few, far between and mostly struggling to stay in existence. Our congregation (the Univ. Unitarian Church of Seattle, WA) could muster all of seven youth of high school age with three from my own family. During the World War II years we did not travel, so there were no conferences, no exchanges of ideas, no opportunities to have our horizons stretched. We struggled alone to meet and discuss religious ideas and, with the help of our minister, stretched our social vision to confront the racial discrimination rampant in our community.

Following a brief stint in the US Navy, at the end of WW II, I returned to col-

lege in the Northwest and found myself in the grips of some deep personal longings I could not articulate. I know now that my spirit of disease was a quest for personal association, some experience which would be affirming of self and moving with others to have our world be a better, healthier place.

Out of my search and wonderment I volunteered to participate as a ward attendant in a USC Workcamp in a Mental Hospital in Rhode Island. Since I was on the east coast I was invited to attend the AUY Conference and Continental meeting which was being held on Star Island that summer. Having nothing else to do that weekend I entered the world of the American Unitarian Youth.

That chance encounter in the summer of 1947 proved to be the long sought

for response to my longing and searching. I was quickly captivated by the enthusiasm of the largest group of Unitarians I had ever experienced. I was moved by the sense of belonging which emerged from our discussions, and was confirmed in our worship. I was challenged by the variety of social involvement and concerns presented to us. Intuitively I knew that within the excitement of the AUY I would find a place of belonging and ways to contribute. Something said to me "plant your roots here" and so I did.

The ensuing years proved to be a challenge for personal growth and awareness. I found the structure of the Unitarian youth organization worthy of ideals. (We were not yet merged

with the Universalist youth to become the LRY).

I could not have guessed in the summer months of 1947 that I was entering a path which would test my possibilities for leadership, nor what the opportunities would be. What followed from involvement was service as President of the AUY (1950-52) and from that came 40 years of involvement with the Unitarian Universalist movement, 15 years of the Unitarian Universalist ministry and six of those years as Executive Director of the LRY. There have also come friendships throughout the world and enough experiences for a lifetime and more.

It is my belief that what was true for more than 40 years ago holds a similar truth for the youth of our church &

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this way once and left us markers.

As one who came of age in the UU youth movement of 1965-73, I had lots of good reason to believe that no one had ever been the places we were going in striving for total autonomy and independence of our organization, Liberal Religious Youth, from the institutional church. Our culture (the music, the art, the language, the drugs) was so different. It was. The world was so different than it had ever been before. That was true too.

However, as I met more and more people in our denomination who had also had powerfully important experiences in our youth movements in previous generations, their stories about what they had been through in YPCU or AUY or any of the other alphabet soup of youth organizations that had existed before us, all had a familiar ring to them.

The structures are there to make a home for relationships which help us all to grow: to grow up, and to grow deep, and to grow wide. We are stunting the potential for that growth if we ignore where we have come from. History may be a burden, but it is the kind of burden represented by the sandbags,

the ballast, on a hydrogen balloon. Without them, the balloon carries us aimlessly up and away. We lose our ability to steer, to rise and fall with the changing forces and currents we encounter in the atmosphere we presently traverse.

YRUU's Five Year Review Report comes at just the right time in the history of our youth community and institution. The energy and the impetus that gave birth to YRUU out of the ashes of LRY has dissipated. The constituency and the leadership are totally new again. You will need to light your own fire that will heat the air under the balloon that carries your hopes and dreams for the YRUU that is now yours.

That fire is the real continuity that any study of our history will point to. Reading the history may help you figure out how to light one of your own, but that's not all it takes.

YRUU in all its many forms has taught me how to dare, to try, to fail, to succeed, to care and to love. They are lessons I will never forget. Our task today is to insure that this beloved community continues to be there, to give these same opportunities to those who come after us.

Passing the Flame: LRY Traditions

by **ANDY HOMMEL**,
Brookline, MA

Exactly ten years ago, when I was a freshman in high school, I first joined my local chapter of the LRY at my church, the First Parish in Framingham, MA. We held weekly meetings every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. I later found out that, during my older brothers' time, Wednesday had been chosen because there was nothing worth watching on TV that night. This is the way traditions are born. Last I knew, meetings were still being held on Wednesday evenings.

My first foof came several months after the meeting. Chris and I were the only new freshmen that year and when someone mentioned foofing, Chris asked, "What's a FOOF?". Chris found out. I saw what a foof was and ran out the door at top speed. Everyone was too busy gang-foofing Chris to get me. When I felt the coast was clear, I slowly wandered back in, but stayed near the door in case I wanted to leave quickly. This was a stupid move on my part because no sooner had I walked in the door, than it was slammed shut. What's more, the hand that shut it was one of our advisor's (Yes, the advisor - you know, the person who is supposed to watch, but not really do anything.) Needless to say, after a short struggle, I got gang-foofed and was fully initiated into LRY.

One of the first games I remember we called "Darling, I Love You!" It's a simple game. We would sit in a circle and someone would be "It". "It" would go around the circle and try to make someone laugh or smile. "It" would have to say, "Darling, I love you, won't you please, please smile?" and the other person would have to say, "Darling, you know I love you, but I just can't smile". We always played with the rule that you could not tickle the other person in order to make them smile.

Storytelling is one tradition I remember with fondness. Someone would start a story and then pass it on to someone else. It was usually a challenge to leave a cliff-hanger for the next person to resolve.

The oldest tradition I remember was checking in while passing the candle. The best thing we would do was sit in a circle and light a candle. Whomever had the candle would talk about his or her life for the past week. This was good because it let the group know how everyone was feeling that day. The rule was that whomever had the candle could talk and everyone else was supposed to shut up but this didn't always happen.

These are some of the best LRY traditions. It warms my heart to know that some of them have carried over to YRUU.

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A Past President's Point of View

by **EUGENE PICKETT**,
*Senior Minister,
Church of the Larger Fellowship,
Boston, MA*

The organization of YRUU was one of the major achievements during my term as President of the Unitarian Universalist Association. A great deal of the credit for this achievement is due to the Rev. Wayne Arneson, whom I appointed as Youth Director in 1980. Through his commitment to youth, his competence and tact, and his hard work, he accomplished what many thought was a "mission impossible".

Wayne's task was to disband one youth organization and facilitate the creation of a new one — and to do this with a sense of appreciation for

the old and sensitivity to the needs of the new.

LRY had served our movement well for many years, but by the mid-1970's it had become a source of much controversy and was becoming increasingly ineffective in serving the youth in our local churches. There was a strongly-felt need for greater interaction between youth and adults and for a closer organizational relationship between our youth program and the UUA.

The Common Ground process was an innovative and creative method for resolving differences and creating unity among the many constituencies involved. It was a "peak experience" for both youth and adults. As a participant in Common Ground

II, I was inspired, excited, and confident that we could develop an organization and program that would meet the needs of our youth, speak to the concerns of our adults, and create together a youth program that would involve and inspire a new generation of youth.

It is my impression that, during the 5 years of its existence, YRUU has fulfilled the promise of the Common Ground experience. It is gratifying to know that the 5-year review of YRUU is positive and makes recommendations that will strengthen the effectiveness and vitality of YRUU as it seeks to speak to the religious concerns of our young people as they face the 1990's.

faith today and in our future. Both then and now providing a place for resting, learning, belonging and affirming — all the elements of the deep religious experiences which give hope and love in our lives. They are the experiences which make for the strong foundations for creative and whole living.

I'm grateful that some folks, almost 100 years ago, prepared the soil and planted the seeds which would become the YPCU/YPRU, UYF/AUY, LRY and now YRUU. Each generation will have its symbols and practices unique to its time. But behind them all I feel are experiences and seeds which come out of the common ground of youth and life.

Wings

YRUU's Visions

It's O.K. to Dream

by **JEFFREY JAMISON,**

Boston, MA

Did you ever have one of those days that changed your life? Throughout my eight years of involvement in YRUU, I have had many experiences which have shaped not only who I am, but who I will become. But one fall afternoon, during the UU young adult peace caravan, will always stand out as one of the most important days of my life. The day was going to be filled with tours, a picnic in a graveyard, a visit to the Dana McLean Greeley foundation, and, finally, dinner. Needless to say, I did not envision this as being a fun filled day, but my mind, as well as my life was soon to be changed. As we entered the Dana Greeley foundation, (Dana was the first president of the UUA), I was struck by the images of Dana with such leaders as John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. At that moment I was reminded of JFK's quotation, "One man can make a difference, every man should." Dana was an individual who proved that any single person can make a difference.

From there we went to the graves of Dana Greeley, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry D. Thoreau. Thoreau had always been a hero of mine, but I was amazed that his grave site was marked with a rock

which simply said HENRY. At that point I realized that he was an individual, in the same way I am, and that I could become anything I wanted.

Our final stop was Walden Pond. It was the perfect ending to the perfect day. I sat down on the sand to watch as the sun set behind a landscape exploding with colors. I closed my eyes and my mind began to drift. I dreamed about a world that existed without war, or hate, or violence. Then, someone broke the stillness of the water and broke my utopian vision. My dream had ended. Thoreau once said that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavours to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. I keep that day and that dream close to my heart. It is important to dream, for those dreams will shape the future of YRUU. I envision leadership development conferences occurring around the continent. Conferences which incorporate and inspire adults. Adults who, unlike David Bowie's song, "Changes," don't "spit on us," but bathe us in their knowledge and wisdom. And, with them, we will share our youthfulness, spirit, and dreams. YRUU is our organization and its success or failure will depend on us. It is important to follow your dreams and to make a difference in our world.

Fun For Thought

by **VALMENISCUS,**
Youth Council Representative,
Madison, WI

The future of YRUU. It is subject to so many speculations, and who am I to say that I know what will happen to this youth movement? I am not a predictor of futures and I won't start now, but I have a dream. I have a hope for preserving the health of the youth movement and Unitarian Universalism in general.

Perhaps I have spent too much time analyzing my dream and this has reduced it all to a very simplistic yet realistic and novel idea: BRING BACK THE FUN! Yep, that would do it. It would bring a spark of life back to continental and district events, and it would definitely help

my locally operated youth group. Adding some fun would benefit every level of YRUU structure. The way to interject fun into YRUU affairs is twofold: First, a group, (we could call it a committee) of the most fun and funniest people need to get together to develop and write down fun games, songs, and learn techniques to energize people. After all the materials are developed and collected, they can be dispersed continentally and globally through fun and humour development conferences. You may think this is funny yourself, and so you are not the type of person these conferences would target. The participants would fall under two categories, those who have a clearly apathetic view of YRUU and need to be energized, motivated and welcomed

From the President

by **REV. WILLIAM SCHULZ,**
President,
Unitarian Universalist Association
Boston, MA

As one who was a third-grade dropout from Unitarian [Universalist] church school and didn't have anything to do with churches again until late in my senior year in high school, I have a particular appreciation, I think, for all that I missed growing up without a religious community of my peers.

My early childhood experiences of church were all positive ones — particularly the time the guinea pig got loose in the sanctuary and the day we visited the Roman Catholic Cathedral and the priest fed us those great wafers and those tiny glasses of grape juice (though in retrospect I wish I hadn't kept asking for seconds and thirds). But then between the ages of nine and eighteen there is a great void as far as church was concerned.

Perhaps that is one reason it has been so important to me to support YRUU and see to the re-establishment of a UUA program for young adults. I was one of the lucky ones — I kept my UU attachments despite the lack of a support group. But we can't count on that—in fact, we can probably count on such a vacuum to wean youth away from

us in droves! But Unitarian Universalism has no future if we are careless with our young people. And not only no future—but little vitality in the present.

There are many reasons why YRUU is important but three which particularly excite me are these: YRUU (1) helps youth and adults learn to relate to one another within a religious community in as constructive and mutually supportive a way as possible; (2) helps youth discover and clarify the spiritual dimension of their lives; and (3) helps all of us understand ourselves as global citizens, not just residents of North America. (The recent YRUU Council resolution on "Welcoming Non-North American UU Youth" is an excellent start in this last regard.)

Youth-adult relations are not always easy. It's sometimes hard to find adults who aren't frightened of being with young people in an intense and meaningful way. And then too—let's face it—youth sometimes frustrate the hell out of us adults! But my experience with YRUUs has been overwhelmingly positive. I'm terribly proud of all that YRUU has accomplished and I'm eager to do anything I can in my final term as President to be of help.

And one more thing: thanks for the vote of confidence for us Innies!

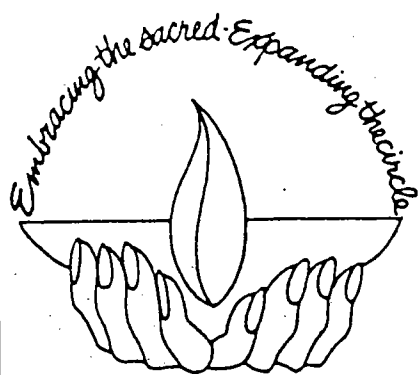
into the YRUU world, and then there would be those who suffer from sick senses of humour who need to be sensitized to other peoples needs. An example might be a person who sings "Don't Worry, Be Happy" until someone in the audience vomits. This is hysterically funny to the singer, but that person is actually making people ill.

While I try to add some humour into this article and I admittedly don't do a good job, it is all the more reason for you, the reader, to become aware and above all incensed that such a problem could exist for so long without any strong plan of action! No doubt you have wondered if there isn't something more fun than making food sculptures at youth group or writing articles for Synapse. The truth is, my brothers and sisters, that there is something you

can do, and that is to spice it up yourself. Don't wait for the district organization to detect that you have a less than average sense of humour, and they can cart you away to a fun/humour development conference, fix yourself NOW! I call upon every member of YRUU to make it her/his personal contribution to the YRUU movement to make it more energized, more lively, more sparky and especially, if there is any reason to have a UU youth organization on this planet, to make it the most fun and most worthwhile program that anyone has ever joined. Then, my friends, when the dream has come true, you will be able to consider yourself the rescuer of YRUU; the one who saved it from the grips of boredom and apathy and the restorer of all the beautiful gifts that the YRUU movement can bring to all of its participants.

SEX FLASH!

by Laura Somerville, Lake Placid, FL



ATTENTION WOMEN!

If you are a young woman and are concerned about the future of women in the Unitarian Universalist movement and in the world, here is your chance to make a difference. Come to *Womanquest*, the 1990 UU Women's Convocation, held at Lake Geneva, WI, April 20-25. The conference will feature powerful speakers and musicians such as: Starhawk, Rosemary Bray McNatt and Holly Near! By participating, you will be helping to develop a document stating the goals that UU women will be working toward in the 21st century. It is of utmost importance that young women are represented in this consensus process. If you are interested in attending, please contact me at the address below. There is scholarship money available! I hope to see you there!

Val Tremelat 1212 Wellesley Road Madison, WI 53705
(608) 233-1553

Let's talk about sex. I'm glad we're a liberal group and can discuss such things openly and intelligently. It amazes me, frustrates and infuriates me when I see how many people don't know or don't care about the facts. A 16-year-old woman that I work with has a baby. Her 15-year-old best friend is very sexually active and makes no effort to use birth control whatsoever! I'm going to give her some condoms tomorrow. I pray that she'll use them!

I am 19, sexually active, and I enjoy it. I felt comfortable when I "lost" my virginity. I thank my Stepdad and Mom for supporting my decision to go on the Pill when I was ready, and for always giving me condoms whether I felt that I wanted them or not. My parents' liberal attitudes have helped to give me safe, happy and healthy feelings about my sexuality.

I've had some scary and educating experiences lately. A close friend's menstrual period was well over a week late and she feared she had a sexually transmitted disease! Paralleling this situation, I attended a YRUU S.E.X. conference (Self Evaluation and eXpression) in Fort Myers, FL. I expected to already know a lot about the workshops: birth control, AIDS and STDs,

abortion, and homophobia, to name a few. It was enlightening and frightening to realize that I didn't know as much as I thought I did. Then I came back to my troubled friend. We made a two hour road trip to the nearest Planned Parenthood where she received counseling and a full examination. Fortunately, everything is OK now. I watched an interestingly morbid, yet humorous, well-paced video as I waited in the lobby. It covered sex, STD's, AIDS, communication, etc. I think what had the greatest impact on me was AIDS: It's not a matter of trust. I wish it were, but it's not. Think about that.

Probably all of you are much more educated about sex and protection than most of your friends. Still, I encourage you to learn as much as you can. Go to Planned Parenthood, your advisor, minister or parents. One of the greatest conversations I've ever had was in a small car containing 5 people: 3 male and 2 female, on the way to a conference at the opposite end of the state. We shared in a trusting, caring environment so many feelings and experiences about sexuality and relationships. Try talking. To do or not to do? That is *not* the question. However, discussing your sexuality might be the answer.

Youth and Adults...

Be An At-Large Member of Youth Council!

Help determine the future of YRUU.

Meet youth and advisors from all over the US and Canada.

Address the concerns of people in your age group.

The following positions are available:

Adult At-large: (age 23 and up) three positions, two year terms.

Jr. High At-large: (age 12-15) one position, one year term.

Sr. High At-large: (age 15-18) one position, one year term.

Post High At-large: (age 18-22) one position, one year term.

At-large representatives may be from any district and are appointed to represent the members of their age group. During the spring and summer of 1990, they will be responsible for soliciting concerns from YRUU members of their age group. August 11-17, 1990 they will attend the Youth Council, (the annual meeting of YRUU's governing body,) in the Mid-South District, (travel expenses paid). During the following year, they will be in communication with the Youth Office regarding age-specific issues. Applicants should be enthusiastic and prepared to work hard during the week of Youth Council.

To apply, submit a letter discussing your experience, qualifications and strengths, and three letters of recommendation to the

Steering Committee c/o the Youth Office, UUA, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

YOUTH PROGRAMS SPECIALIST POSITION

Applications for the UUA Youth Programs Specialist position -beginning September 1, 1990 through August 31, 1991 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 Programs Specialist, to carry out the administration of Young Religious Unitarian Universalists and responsibilities to the UUA. Duties will include but not be limited to: preparing a youth newspaper, traveling to district and local groups for out-

reach, planning and administering conferences and other youth gatherings, participating in meetings 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. **Your application MUST be postmarked by March 15, 1990** and sent to the YRUU Steering Committee, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108-2800.

THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON SOCIAL JUSTICE APRIL 29- MAY 1, 1990 WASHINGTON D.C.

The Youth Caucus at the National Workshop on Social Justice has developed over the years into an active and exciting group within the larger conference. The workshop is divided into two sections. The first two days are centered around speakers and discussions on various social justice topics. Some training is done in lobbying in order to prepare participants for the last day of the conference when they lobby their people in Congress. The workshop is an excellent opportunity to learn and meet UUs from all over the U.S. For more information, contact the UU Washington Office, 100 Maryland Ave., NE, Room 106, Washington, DC 20002. Phone: (202) 547-0254.

Correction/ Apology:

In Volume VII, Issue 2, we reported incorrect information about the Boulder youth group in "District News". The Boulder group is alive and well and their advisor has not been removed on any charges. We apologize for any inconvenience that this has caused to the youth group or to their advisor.

Addition:

In Volume VII, Issue 1, information on former Youth Programs Specialists was published. We would like to add that David Levine was responsible, among other things, for getting the first computers for the Youth Office. Thanks David!!

Advisor's News

Just what is a YRUU advisor? The answer is different for each of us. It reflects our religious community and its values, youth members and their values, and the life experience an advisor brings to the job.

My local congregation actually began, almost forty-five years ago, as a church school. The congregation's ongoing commitment to religious education (for children, youth, and adults) is a vital energy that fuels the quality and scope of our total program.

Our local youth group is based on the "Senior Seminar" model, and is part of the R.E. program. We meet regularly on Sunday mornings, have several sleepovers each year (some designed as mini-conferences, others dedicated to special projects or concerns), and sometimes spend entire Sundays together (to build our sense of community, have fun and take part in appropriate adult programs). Seminar members are high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Sometimes weekday evening sessions are held as well.

Each year's group has its own personality, dynamics, and goals. Presenting a Youth Sunday worship service for the congregation is our only "given" for the year. The rest of Seminar's program is shaped by its members and their particular interests. Roughly one-third of Seminar's members are selected by the group to serve as a

Steering Committee that meets monthly (sometimes more often) with our engagingly thoughtful associate advisor, John, and me, to "keep us moving" toward our goals. This year there are fifteen new sophomores (!), each one of them a treasure, so we've spent more time than usual "getting better acquainted" before identifying shared goals for "doing," "learning," and "growing" together. Highlights anticipated for this year include continued outreach efforts to connect with other nearby UU youth, more social responsibility involvement, and a weekend trip... in addition to our usually-informal exploration of what being Unitarian Universalists—and living our religion—is all about.

My introduction to the denominational YRUU Youth Council began two years ago, when Seminar's year-end trip was to YRUU week at Star Island. Serving as an adult advisor was my "ticket" onto the island. It gave me my first opportunity to experience a primarily youth-led program...and, more important, it introduced me to two incredible YRUU Program Specialists, Leia Durland and Andrew Moeller, who were also on staff for the week. Leia, Andrew, and I worked together happily and extensively, and I began to see that an essential ingredient for any successful youth group—empowerment—was something to work on more intentionally back home. I'd clearly carried over too much of the "teacher" role,

which had worked well for two years with ninth grade groups, into Seminar my first two years. While I'd always searched for alternatives and options that left as many decisions as possible to the group as a whole (both ninth grade and Seminar), I'd kept too much of the responsibility for leadership to myself.

I was delighted—felt honored, in fact—when Leia called two weeks after our Star Island experience, and invited me to fill a last-minute Adult-At-Large opening on Youth Council. Off I went to the steam room that calls itself Tulsa, in August—and spent a week in absolute awe of the gifted and capable youth there. The adults were wonderful, too...and the spirit of youth-adult collaboration was energizing. Once again, I saw youth using and perfecting skills usually associated only with adults...conducting what amounts to a mini-General Assembly... tackling difficult issues with both vigor and sensitivity (as Youth Council was briefed on recommendations by The Five-Year Review Committee appointed by the UUA Board of Trustees to assess how YRUU had fared since its inception, and how it could be even more effective as an organization)... leading and attending excellent workshops...and creating nightly worship experiences that were among the most moving I've ever experienced. By the end of the week I was glad my participation had been technically "unofficial." That meant I could

apply for a "regular" two-year term as an Adult-At-Large this past Spring! This year's Youth Council, in Michigan, was no less impressive...and a little more comfortable because it meant meeting "old friends" as well as new, and "knowing the ropes." And fortunately, the climate and weather collaborated, too.

For this year so far, and last year too, the rich experiences at Youth Council have helped me grow as an advisor. Leadership responsibility is now shared by Seminar youth and advisors more extensively than before... and we're all growing as a result. There have been occasional rough spots, of course...transitions are never easy. Seminar is—and must be—a place that's "special" in many ways... where members are accepted, ultimately loved, for being who we really are... can share what's most important to us in total confidence... celebrate each other (!)... live the principle of the inherent worth and dignity of every human being, regardless of our ages... experience the motive force of love that connects us to each other and to the rest of the world... and be moved to act, as we can, to make it a better one. And all of that, for me, is what being an advisor is all about: being a person who cares, can be trusted, has a lot of patience and, most of all, constantly remembers that the group is really a voluntary extended family... one that's "owned" by every one of its members... but most fully owned by its youth.

Ten Commandments for Junior High Advisors

by Meg Riley, Youth Programs Director, Youth Office

The needs of junior high groups are somewhat different from High School groups. In general, a more structured environment with stronger adult leadership is helpful for junior highers. Forthwith are some helpful tips for the wonderful world of Junior High advisorship. Despite their name, they're NOT written in stone!

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR JUNIOR HIGH LEADERSHIP

1. **Don't do it by yourself!** Ideally, find someone with whom you can relax, in whom you trust, and who will laugh with you during this challenge!

2. **Plan to enjoy yourself in this enterprise!** Nothing is more suicidal than taking junior high advisory too seriously! You should laugh heartily at LEAST five times per session.

3. **Advising junior high is a serious commitment.** Think carefully about your time and other commitments before you enter into this one. A one-year commitment is probably minimal here.

4. **Find a regular day and time to meet.** You will need a minimum of two hours per session together. The key is to establish youth group as a normal part of life, rather than an unpredictable surprise.

5. **Have a clear plan for each session.** You may want to alternate "in-house" activities with adventures. Begin each session with more highly structured activities, and leave looser ones for later.

6. **Make sure there are snacks!** You may want to initiate a rotation system, where a different person brings snacks each time.

7. **Develop a personal relationship with each youth.** Personal relationships are what keep kids and adults returning week after week. Drop them a note if they don't attend. If they aren't connecting well with other kids, encourage them to bring a friend from school. It is important

to realize that theyouth group is not for the fulfillment of your needs! It is for the youth. Relationships with youth can be fun for adults, but they cannot be central sources of companionship, self-esteem, or emotional expression.

8. **As a group, develop goals which extend beyond the week-to-week.** Obvious examples include fund-raising goals, planning trips or conferences, creating a play or video. These goals need to be challenging, yet attainable. You may need to take a great deal of responsibility at the beginning, but as the year goes on, this should cease to be true. If you find yourself doing an inordinate amount of work, reconsider the goal with the group.

9. **If your group is small, make plans to join with other UU groups for social events.** Begin with shorter events, then work up to an overnight party or a weekend conference. Again, these events should be structured, with plenty of room for friendships to develop.

10. **Keep the "R" in YRUU.** Don't be ashamed to talk about your own commitment to U-Uism. You may want to post the principles and purposes prominently, and use *their* language in discussions about cliques, behavior problems, rudeness. Worship can be tricky with junior highers, so try asking senior highers to help facilitate it.

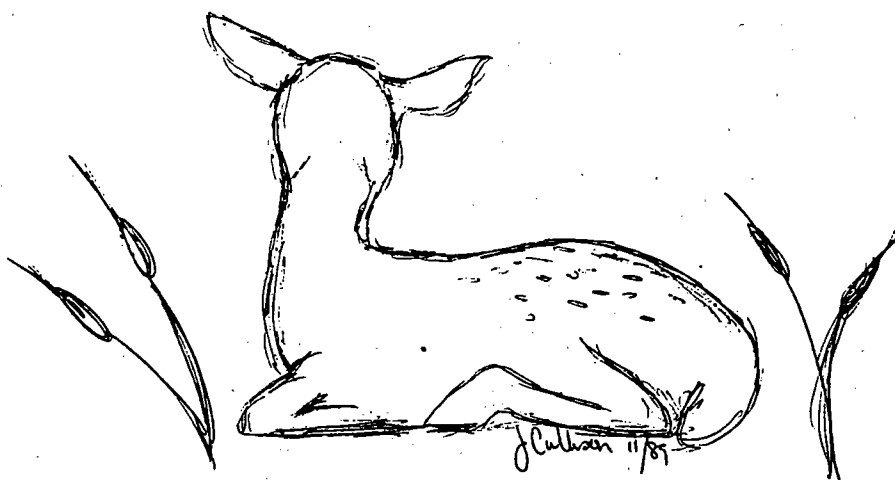
I realize that this article does not mention any program suggestions. For a few of those, please refer to the REACH packet which will arrive in your church in mid-February. Let us know what your group is doing. Mail flyers, postcards, etc. to: Meg Riley, Youth Programs Director, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108 and Tom Doyle, Reed College box 551, Portland, OR 97202.



CONTACT THE YOUTH OFFICE!

- o for information about youth conferences and events.
- o for ideas and resources for youth groups.
- o for help in starting a youth group.
- o if you want to become an advisor.
- o if your youth group wants to receive *Synapse*.

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





Poetry

by Jamey Montgomery

As I gaze up to the stars on a warm autumn night,
I wonder if there really is a god with superior might.
The speckled sky that I see fills me with awe and wonderment,
And I wonder how this beauty can be the result of an accident.
But I'm an agnostic, no one has proven god to me.
While my religious friends say, "The proof is life, can't you see?"
So I retire myself for the evening, with this philosophical conception,
You'll miss out on life, if you just debate the question.

WHAT DO YOU TELL HIM? by Laura Somervill

What do you tell him
When he tells you he is falling
And the only thing he can see in front of him is a crash?
When the pressure is choking him,
And he can't breathe,
The oxygen doesn't get to his brain,
So he can't think,
When he is sinking and struggling
Angered and confused
Tortured and abused
By society, life, and...
Himself?

What do you tell him
That he has not heard before?
Do you tell a drowning man that it will be all right.
Just wait and see.
Do you tell a man trapped in a cold, dark pit
Hungry and hopeless, too tired to fight
That it's really not that bad.
Can you tell him you understand
When you've never been suffocated before?

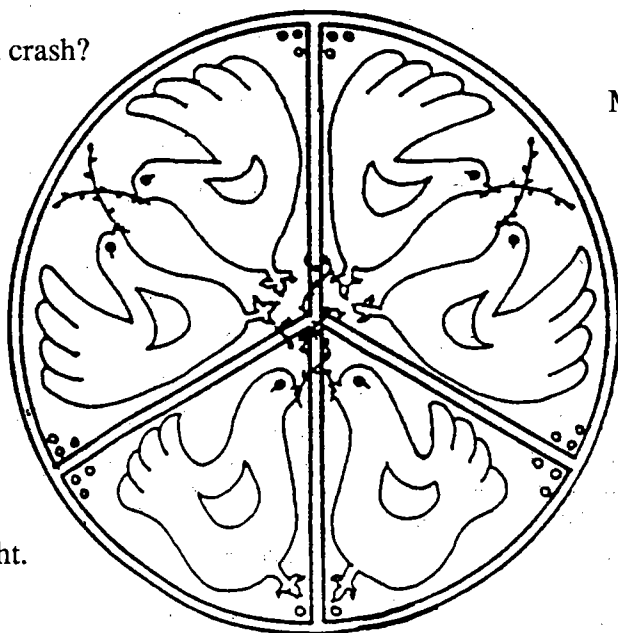
What can you do
But hold him and tell him you care
Pray that that is enough
To get him through another day
So he will stay
To see one more sunrise

by Reed

I sit here in awe,
love shaking through me
who knows the power
who can know their will
thought is the last thought
middle is never
the middle has passed
I sit here in awe
Shake through me...rapture.
may never come again.

WHO ARE WE? by Malcolm

Some say pro-anarchy,
some say pro-communism.
but, can they love like me and you?
Some say pro-socialism,
some say pro-capitalism,
but, can they feel love like me and you?
Some say pro-war and hate,
some say pro-peace and love,
but, can they make the right decision?



EGG

by JilKar

Behold the egg

The wondrous egg

The greatest thing

That's ever laid

Within this Easter circle rare

Are feathers, feet, toenails, hair

What other thing, of God's creation

More miracle of presentation

More worthy is, of celebration!

CRICKET by Jason Happel

Cricket, cricket without a leg,
From you no music will I beg.

What atrocious and horrible foe
Did pluck that leg that was your bow?
It took your lively song away,
Muting your affection,
Leaving you to hop, I say,
In only one direction.

A one legged cricket you will be,
From here until eternity

I HURTLY by Kira Koplos

i can hurtly remember now
i can hurtly feel the past
the way i acted like i didn't care
when i was really just confused
the way i hurt you
and all we had become
because i hurt,
i should have seen it
because i'd done it before
and i should have known
what i know now
you hurt
i hurt you
i love you
i loved you
what does it all mean now
when it all comes too late?
what good will "i'm sorry" do?
our hurt won't be explained
by "i'm sorry"
so i live and learn and grow
through those i've loved
and those i've hurt
and they shouldn't be the same
but they are,
it's in the rules,
i can hurtly remember now
the hurt i never admitted before
the confusion i never confronted
and need you now
but hurt you then
and they will never be the same
again.

PERSONALS

I recently enlisted in the U.S. Navy and I am desperate to receive mail. If you would like to become pen-friends, please write to me. My address is: Green, Christopher M. SR, 560-69-9707 Co. 224, RTUNTC, San Diego, CA 92133-2000.

Hobbes, Funny, you don't look yuppish. - Calvin

Hi to all the Groovy lovin' people at Youth Caucus, G.A. '89 in Hartford. I miss each one of you, keep freakin' out. Love to Matt, Gretchen, Darryl and Karen. I'll love you two times. Albert HM

PSWD is not dead! YRUU Mini-Con April 6-8. Guess where? Chandler, Arizona! We're back. Love and Peace to N.C., Mass., San Diego, N.Y. and Panama. RSVP: 1700 W. Warner, Chandler, AZ 85224. Keep it up guys. IMO

Jeffer: Let's have nachos, ice cream and go to a movie next week. Will you tell me a story? Love Beckster.

To Synapse Editors: Thanks for your service year-round. The whole youth movement is very special to 30 lonely UU's in Chandler. Keep the home fires burning. F.E. Farmer

Looking for some U.U.'s correspondents. Me? I'm a 15-girl. Hobbies? drama, peace and (Dead Milkmen) You? U.U. and

happy. Address: Renee Bouchard, 27 Danforth, Norway, ME 04268 Por favor!

Tony D., Never lose hope, Your dreams touch! Rockin' Robin

Genni K., I love ya girl! Don't get lost in the big world you just graduated into! Keep me posted on the wonders of your life! Love, R.E.D.

Nagel S., It was nice while it lasted! Hope your life is filled with love, peace and happiness! Love, your Texas gal, R.E.D.

I'm looking for one I know, one Jastoned Harristone, one fretless bassist, one Nitsuj Nosirrah, one reader of "Anarchy Today" WRITE: Eric Belsey, Alta Lodge, Alta, UT 84092 and then, YIELD TO MY AWESOME POWER.

Natalie - I haven't forgotten you, just been very busy. Where'd you decide to go to college? Do you still feel wings? - I'm still flying. Friendship & Moonbeams, Arianna

Nikki - Where-ever you roam remember in my heart you have a home. When-ever you question remember the answers are your own. When-ever you cry-out, are lost, or need a friend, remember you can call on me (yes even at 3 a.m.) I'll be there for you - always I'll be there for you! I Love You SisterStar! - ARIANNA

To Julie - hey! It's your second year at Harvard after your second summer Pelican-ing at Star Island -keep that e-mail coming because I love you. - Fran

Cata - Is it cold enough for you in St. Paul? Enjoy yourself! I love you and I hope we stay in touch forever. Wanna cook dinner sometime, now that we've both had the experience? I love you - Fran

Flat-head: You are the yin to my yang. Tons of love, Fluffy-head.

Calvin - The work of Old Nick is never done, but only a constant refounding, you know. Hobbes.

To The Prince at Oreo: It's just that I'm lazily, crazily bizzy but I am working arts for you to dream on; a tardy *bon voyage* gift. So sorry. Signed, No-Bodhi in particular.

To my YRUU WBBU GROUPIES: YiUi + Sarah - My address is: 122 Calumet, Apt. 3, Roxbury, MA 02120. Write to me. Love, Vance

Star Island Types: Sean Elliot lives at Mt. Olympus with your friendly Youth Staffers. Write to him there. He needs mail.

Hey Collin! (Yes, I mean the lazy elohssa from Eugene); how are you? I'll be back soon! Truly yours, namreg.

UU-UNO Youth Disarmament guys and gals. You made New York a friendly place. Come to Con-Con so we can hang out again before I return to the wilds of Montreal. Remember the web. Love, Becky.

CAT DOWNING Please write me as soon as possible. Let me know how you are. I miss you and I love you!! Debi Gelfand 6415 Farley Dr. San Diego, CA 92122, (619) 453-3509. If anyone knows how to reach him, please let me know.

Julie, Val, Parisa, Sean, Christina, Clare, Darryl, Jon, Adam, Heather...hope to see you all on la grand road trip April-May. You are such special people, and I'm going to miss you! love, Anne

HELLO OUT THERE! Until June, 1990 my address will be: Debi Gelfand, Andrew Stewart Hall 7-54, University of Stirling, Stirling FK94LP, Scotland UK.

Hey YRUU- It has been a great year and I owe it all you! Keep me up to date on what's happening. My real address is 63 Hancock St. Lexington, MA 02173. Lots of love, your friendly Youth Programs Specialist (YFYPS) Anne S.



SYNAPSE CELEBRITIES

The following people have generously contributed to help save *Synapse*. Many thanks go to them for their donations, as well as, their helpful suggestions about how we can improve *Synapse*.

Friends: Tina Abich, Eric Belsey, Eliza Johnson, Jessamyn Neuhaus, Chip Olson, Kimm Phillips in memory of Malcolm Stevenson, Albert Reinhardt, and Christy Turner.

Patrons: Kendra Ford, Tammy Gaumnitz, Dal and Elizabeth Leite, Number 42, Fran Poodry, Faith and Peter Scott, Chris Smith, and Gwen Wember.

Benefactors: Ellen Brandenburg, Joyce Ann Holeman, and the Mass. Bay District YRUU Steering Committee.

Super-Duper-Happy Synapse Celebrities: The Madison Youth Group, Robin Daffinee and Edith Parker.

YOU TOO CAN JOIN THE LIST OF CELEBRITIES WHO HAVE HELPED SAVE 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 YRUU to open his or her mail box may find. . . nothing, just dark, empty, cold space. 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. 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*. All contributions are appreciated.

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 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?



We want you at THE MOUNTAIN!

If you like children, are a responsible, caring person and would like to work and play with other UU youth, please consider a staff or counselor position at THE MOUNTAIN next summer.



THE MOUNTAIN
841 Highway 106
Highlands, NC 28741
(704) 526-5838

