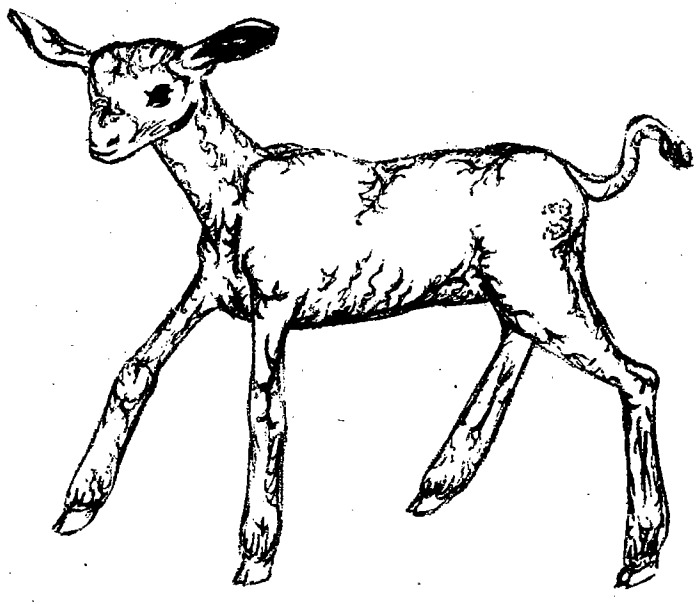


A Point of Contact Where Energy and Information are Exchanged

# SYNAPSE

Volume XI, Issue 1, Spring/Summer 1993 Printed on Recycled Paper, in the United States of America



## celebrating life



<input type="radio"/> Trim my address! This is not the only copy of Synapse I have received! Please, from now on only send it to the address below.	<input type="radio"/> Forward it! I have an alternative address (my summer home in Barbados), and have clearly marked which is which and when each is in effect. Thanks!	<input type="radio"/> I'm Outta Here! This is a really groovy mag and all, but I no longer need it. Please remove my name from your mailing list. Thank you.	<input type="radio"/> Moving! I'm not in Kansas anymore. Well, maybe that's not true, but I have moved and would like you to replace my address with the one below. Thank you.	<b>What's Inside??</b>  Page 3... Personals  Page 4... Continental Happenings  Page 5... New People on the Scene  Page 6-7... UU Expressions  Page 9... Social Action  Page 11... YRUU School  ...and more... Whew!
<input type="radio"/> Synapse Rocks!	<div>YRUU at the UUA 25 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02108</div> <div>NonProfit Organization U.S. POSTAGE PAID BOSTON, MA Permit No. 8652</div>			
<input type="radio"/> Change my address! I don't know how I got this, but I want to get it again- so make the changes below!				
<input type="radio"/> Add Me!! What facinating reading! Here is my name, address, and birthday for your mailing list. Please add me on. Thank you. <div><input type="checkbox"/> I'm an adult.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I'm an advisor.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I'm a youth.</div>				



# Letters to the Editor

## Dear Editors,

Synapse is cool! - Garrett Brown, Tulsa, OK

Dear Garrett,

Wow! Thanks a bunch. -the Editors



## Dear Sweet Synapse,

I received your paper today and ran up to my room to read it. I loved all of it - until I came to the very last page. I read the short piece entitled "Random Thoughts." It made me cry. I don't know who Miranda Murray is and I doubt that I ever will, but her work struck me right in my heart. I went to the "Making a Difference Con" that was held December 4-6 at the Mountain Conference Center in NC this past weekend. I met a lot of cool people. It isn't my first con, mind you, (it's my 8th!) but it was my favorite.

Anyway, when I read "Random Thoughts" I realized that after this year (I am a senior) there will be no more Senior High youth cons for me to go to and act like a silly, individualistic youth. There will be no more back rub trains, bad food and loud dances with cool music. I want all YRUUers to savor these precious moments. Go make friends and keep in touch with them, but mostly have fun. Days go by so quickly. Don't sit around. Do what you want to do (But don't break the BIG 4!). Join the Young Adult group once you're too old for YRUU. I'll see you there.

Love with a big heart, Sarah Arnott, Raliegh, NC

Dear Sarah,

We certainly sympathize with the sadness you feel in leaving an organization that has transformed your life. Your advise is superb. Getting involved in the young adult group in your area is a wonderful opportunity to use the skills YRUU has fostered within you to create a groovin' Unitarian Universalist Young Adult experience for all. Who knows, maybe we will see you there too. P.S. Contact Kevin McCulloch "Continental Contact Person for Something Happening" at Haverford College, Havorford, PA 19041 to get on the 18-25 years old UU Young Adult Network (UUYAN) mailing list. -the Editors



## Dear Synapse Editors,

I have just finished reading the latest issue and I must say it is one of the best.

While attending Con Con this past August I was part of a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual fishbowl in which we were asked to state our name and sexual orientation. This exercise made me uncomfortable (and I said so). While a handful of us were looking at one another with lost looks, I continued to hear "straight", "lesbian", "bisexual" and with every passing label I grew more and more uneasy. What was I going to say? Could I accurately give myself a label? How, after so many years of questioning, could I possibly abstract it into something so impersonal and incomplete as "straight"?

It was my turn. People watched as I stumbled over my own words. I was desperately searching my head for whatever it was that would satisfy the group.

I finally gave some sort of evasive answer about not liking labels, finding them insufficient to my needs and left it at that. The experience left me thinking - 1) What makes me so sure that I am what I think I am? and 2.) If given the chance, what would I say now?

The article "Perspectives: by Three YRUU Women" published in the most recent issue of Synapse was very moving.

I often assume that there are others like me in any given situation and that "I am not alone", but reading the words that so eloquently expressed how I felt was touching. I am thankful to you for publishing it as well as to the authors for writing it. With visions of sugarplums, Elon Cameron, Traverse City, MI

Dear Elon,

We are thrilled that you enjoyed the creative work "Perspectives: by Three YRUU Women" in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Issues spread in the previous issue of Synapse. As you know, last year at Youth Council in Freeport, Maine, LGB concerns was enthusiastically chosen to be the continental social action focus. It is encouraging to us that this is a topic so close to all of our hearts. - the Editors

## Dear Synapsers,

Between the time I wrote my letter condemning you and the time you published it, I've made peace with a number of the Unitarian aspects.

I am wearing a mask now - one that isn't tangible. It makes me look dark and feel secure. It hides my broken vulnerability and puts my outbursts of rage in control. I feel like a dark figure, vigilant and on his guard.

Sometimes it all becomes too much. I rip off the mask, feeling too much and being cared for too little. I smolder. I cry. Yet, I have gained understanding from those very few individuals to whom I reached out.

I've found a true cosmic mate at my Unitarian church. When I don my mask again I plan to jump among the wilderness to help those in need to see the light. We are both meant to do that.

I stand tall after being down so long. No matter what, I can't stop who I really am. I become collapsed, confused and ripped apart.

Those who understand let me embrace you. Let's speak out our doubts and misgivings. Let's start to bring more sense into the world- make a true point of living.

You listened to me. You paid attention. In my seclusion, at present, I am weeping at your understanding in your response to my letter.

Love, darkness, vigilance and random voyages,

James Dean a.k.a. anonymous

Dear James Dean,

We are delighted to hear that you have made peace with yourself and your faith. We admire your honesty and perseverance. Growing up as a young Unitarian Universalist with a questioning mind is often a frightening process. Sometimes as you're making the voyage down the path of discovery you will stumble and fall. The trick is to pick yourself up off the proverbial ground, dust yourself off, and forge onward. Happy trails. -the Editors



A Few Funky Fresh Folks  
from the Florida District ©

## Letters to the Editor:

Synapse encourages letters from our readers. We reserve the right to edit any letters we receive for publication. All submissions should include the author's name. However, names will be withheld upon request. Thanks. -the Editors.

## So Tell Me About This Synapse.

Synapse is a publication of Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU), the youth organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association 25 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02108 Subscription is free. Two issues and a spread in Sept/Oct issue of *World* per annum.

**YRUU Staff:** Jennifer Martin, Serena Smallin, Jory Agate, and Anne Fleming.

**Mechanicals:** Proofreading, edits and layout by your ever so groovy staff.

**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 the name and address attached. Multiple submissions accepted. The editors observe the following limits when possible for each author's submission:

**Articles:** One per issue of each of three types: news, theme, reflective.

**Poems:** One per issue

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

**Graphics:** No limit

The above limits do not apply to letters to the editor. Submissions not used will be kept on file for possible use in future issues. 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 vary depending on size and type of organization. UUA affiliate and associate organizations and events sponsored by these and UUA committees or an organization's committee receive special rates. Also, non camera ready, or odd-sized ads have special rates. Advertisements are not endorsed by the Youth Office, the UUA, or YRUU. The editors reserve the right to refuse any advertisement. Pogo Sticks are fun!

**Submission and Advertising Due Date for Next Issue:**

**Oct 1, 1993.**

# Personals

To the November Peacemakers...  
I hold so many precious memories and  
vivid images of you all. I miss you!  
Write:

Melissa Schoeplein  
2208 S. Lynn  
Urbana, IL 61801

P.S. YRUU: Stop wondering what  
would happen if you actually wrote to  
a stranger in Synapse and do it. I'll  
write back.

Staci Sue,  
We're at Neurotic Nineteen! It's OK to go  
crazy hon, because I love you no matter  
what! It's been ten years and counting...  
BITCH POSSE QUEEN,  
Julianne.

San Antonio  
was a blast! I love you, Donna,  
Susanna, Julie, Joel. Special Yo's  
for Laura, Toni, Julia, & all at  
New Orleans. Special Special Yo's  
to Erin, Emily & all of Austin.  
Special Special Special Yo's to  
every UUer in existence which I  
haven't named.  
P.S. - trust it. it's a spork  
Garrett "the soul doctor"  
Brown



Colin-  
I see in you all the strength, power,  
love, and sarcasm which will keep  
Michigan together. If I ever had  
even a part of a torch, it's yours  
now. Good luck, and I'll see you in  
mountainside (remember?).

Love, Cait

Hey Albuquerque UUers!  
How ya doin'? Yes, I'm still alive in  
Deutschland. Emily, take care of Elmo.  
Mike, get that thing out of your  
mouth! Caitlin, send me your smile.  
Amy E., Swim a lap for me. Rio, rub  
your chin. Hit anyone lately, Jessica?  
Becky, (sigh!).

Love, Wenis Christ  
Joey, I worship, therefore I belong and  
am set free.

Erica Morrison

To all the funky-ass folks  
that I rough-housed with at the Mountain.  
(This means you... Eric, Stuart and  
Calman)- a warm "Hello! McFly" and I  
love you!!

ERIC: Beware of swallowing  
rocks, liquid draino(- or whatever that  
stuff was!?) and "My father in the  
shower" jokes.

STUART: You are a great Hi-Ho  
Cherry-O referee.

CALMAN: I know your name!  
You're so cool.  
To everybody else I know, including my  
own YRUU- I love you very much.

From the expert HI-  
HO CHERRY-O

PLAYER!

(Sarah A.)

Carrie and Sierra,  
You live next door but I miss our  
OPP corner. Hill and Pat, P'tits,  
Head-Smashed-In-Buffalo-Jump,  
hugs and kisses,

Erica Morrison

Anyone...  
who recognizes my name (\*\*Jonathon  
Jamison\*\*), Respond! For saying  
"Hello" to an old friend may be like  
saying "Hello" to a new one...

Jonathon Jamison  
610 Ceder Ln  
Mt. Prospect IL  
60056-1314

To the Brady Bunch,  
Good Luck with rebellious Marcia!  
Don't give up hope, someday the  
little Brady Boy's voice will  
change. Send Jan to me Quickly!  
-the girl next door

To Build, Not to Destroy  
by Melissa Beth Schoeplein

This past November I attended the 13th annual Unitarian Universalist United Nations Conference on Disarmament in New York City. I am active in my district (the Central Midwest District) but I had never before participated in a continental YRUU event. However, from what I had been told by friends who had gone to the past UN cons, I was in for the time of my life!! They were right.

I arrived in New York City at Laguardia Airport. Although I'd driven around NYC before, I'd never been in it. Sean Ramsey and Jennifer Martin (the YRUU Program Specialists at the time) greeted us as we arrived from all corners of the U.S. They put us in taxis and gave us some money and an address and off we went while they waited for later flights. We stayed at the YMCA--a very international place where we bonded late into the night.

Our days were spent at the UU/United Nations Office across from the UN where guest speakers (from the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Social and Economic Development, and from within the UU community) spoke to us about the state of the world, and about where we are headed unless we make some changes within our government.

The U.S. has the second largest percent of its G.N.P. going toward Military spending. There are lots of "statistics" out there, but the point is, we have to influence our government to make changes. Educate yourself and others and join together to form grassroots organizations. Have a say in where your tax money is going.

The 24 of us youth had a great time in the city, too. We went to the Empire State Building, Greenwich Village, saw a Broadway Play (some even ushered!!!), listened to street musicians, and got lost late at night on our own. We shared information about our different districts and homes and talked about seeing everybody at Con Con and other events. We all returned four days later to our usual hectic lives with renewed spirits filled with inspiration and love for those around us.

This conference is an exhilarating experience and I strongly recommend that anybody interested apply next year. The cost is \$325, which covers transportation to the site, and all room, board and conference costs. That money you can come up with through fund-raisers at your church and by asking for scholarships from your church or district, or you can even ask for help from peace organizations in your town. Carpe Diem!!

## UU United Nations Conference On Disarmament



You Can Apply

For the Next UU-UN  
Conference on  
Disarmament

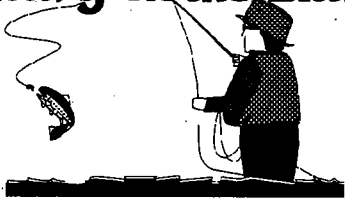
Contact the Youth Office  
for application information  
(617)742-2100, ext. 351 or 352





# Continental Happenings

## Plenary on the Range



Youth Council 1993  
Possum Kingdom Lake, TX  
August 8-13

### Here Are the People That Are Representing YOU at Youth Council

**Dillon Channing:** Kyle Schlesinger  
11 Lincoln Ave., Barrington, RI 02806  
**Central Mass:** Mandy Marchesani (Outgoing)  
697 Townsend Rd., Groton, MA 01450  
**Central Mid-West:** Jesse Jaegar  
6313 Woodington, Madison, WI 53711  
**Connecticut Valley:** Ben Montgomery  
37 Oakwood Rd., Mystic, CT 06355  
**Desert:** Caitlin Chestnut  
395 Bryn Mawr SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106  
**Florida:** Michael Figueroa  
10953 SW 70th Terrace, Miami, FL 33173  
**Joseph Priestley:** Jeanna Steele (Outgoing)  
Rm 433 Gardner Hall, 3925 Univ. St., Montreal, Quebec, CAN H3A 2B7  
**Massachusetts Bay:** Sarah Frederick  
1 Avon Rd., Bedford, MA 01730  
**Metro NY:** Leah Grossman (Outgoing)  
Monroe Hall B257 SUNY at Geneseo  
1 College Circle, Geneseo, NY 14454  
**Michigan:** Colin Bossen  
5165 Brookfield Dr., E. Lansing, MI 48823  
**Mid-South:** Eric Syltie  
1946 Chanaway Dr., Pelham, AL 35124  
**Mountain:** Sarah Gibb  
Wormer Box #1006, Colorado College,  
902 N. Cascade, Colorado Springs, CO 80946  
**New Hampshire/Vermont:** Betsy Nolan (Outgoing)  
18 Oak Hill Dr., Amherst, NH 03031  
**North-East:** Leslie Rosen (Outgoing)  
29 S. Chestnut, Augusta, ME 04330  
**Ohio Meadville:** Holly Larson  
965 McNeilly Rd., Pitsburg, PA 15226  
**Ohio Valley:** Arwen Reiter  
1703 Howell St., Ft. Wayne, IN 46808  
**Pacific Central:** Carrie Corderio (Outgoing)  
UCSC Porter #126, Santa Cruz, CA 95064  
**Pacific Northwest:** Joey Lyons (Outgoing)  
942 E. 18th, Suite 12, Eugene, OR 97403  
**Pacific Southwest:** Carrie McChesney  
2033 Wilbur Ave., San Diego, CA 92109  
**Prairie Star:** Laura Peterson (Outgoing)  
3832 Cottage Grove, Des Moines, IA 50311  
**St. Lawrence:** Ben Holder  
66 Jenkins Rd., Burnt Hills, NY 12027  
**South-West:** Chris Halliwell  
PO Box 701883, Tulsa, OK 74170  
**Thomas Jefferson:** Where's Your Youth Rep?  
**Western Canada:** Ashley Sween  
9308 26th St., SW Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2V 4G9  
**Post High At-Large:** Jon Granat  
8201 SW 101 Ave., Miami, FL 33173  
**Senior High At-Large:** Melissa Schoepfle  
2208 S. Lynn, Urbana, IL 61801  
**Junior High At-Large:** Jonah Eller-Isaacs  
449 Florence Ave., Oakland, CA 94618  
**Adults At-Large:**  
Bob Knuth, 3815 Bryant Ave. S, Minneapolis, MN 55409  
Lisa Savio, 90 Poirier Pl., Burlington, VT 05401  
Dori Davenport, BUC 651 Woodward Ave.,  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304  
Philip Miller, 1604 10th Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404  
Mark Harris, 7511 SW 67th Ave., Miami, FL 33143  
Shell Haley, 2570 Walnut Blvd. #16, Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
Eric Allen, 1714 S. Lakewood, Tulsa, OK 74112

If you have any questions about your district,  
contact your Youth Council Representative listed above.  
If there is no current rep in your area,  
please call or write the Youth Office for information.

## The National Library of Poetry

The National Library of Poetry has announced that \$12,000 in prizes will be awarded this year to over 250 poets in the North American Open Poetry Contest. The deadline for the contest is June 30, 1993. The contest is open to everyone and entry is FREE.

Any poet, whether previously published or not, can be a winner. Every poem entered also has a chance to be published in a deluxe, hardbound anthology.

To enter, send ONE original poem, any subject and any style, to the National Library of Poetry, 11419 Cronridge Dr., P.O. Box 704-Xh, Owings Mills, MD 21117. The poem should be no more than 20 lines, and poet's name and address should appear on the top of the page. Entries must be post-marked by June 30, 1993.

## Desperately Seeking Susan

Well, we've got some good news and some bad news. After many hours of struggle, we've decided to give you the good news first. **Good News:** Thanks to all of you who voted in our logo contest, this is the new YRUU logo.

The artist's name is Susan. Congratulations!

**Bad News:** We have no idea what your last YRUU name is nor where you reside. See,



we accidentally lost the file with the list of those who submitted logo entries. Susan, if you are out there please call us in The Youth Office and tell us where you are. Maybe we'll bake you some cookies or just go on and on about how sorry we are and how cool and talented you are. P.S. If you are not Susan, but know who and where she is, we'd love to hear from you too. Thanks. *In peace,* Jen and Serena

The Unitarian minister Joseph Priestley discovered Oxygen.

*Sing Along to the Summertime Boogie at  
Your Favorite Unitarian Universalist  
Youth Gatherings!*

**General Assembly:** Charlotte, NC, June 24-29. Contact the General Assembly Office at 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108. 617/742-2100.

**DeBenneville Pines:** San Bernadino Mountains in CA, Youth camps run all summer. Contact Ward & Regine Wilson at 41750 W. Jenks Rd., Angelus Oaks, CA 92304. 714/794-2928.

**Southeast UU Summer Institute (SUUSI):** VA Polytechnical Institute in Blacksburg, VA, July 25-31. Contact Colleen Murphy at 333 Elmira Place NE, Atlanta GA 30307. 404/521-1003.

**Southwest UU Summer Institute (SWUUSI):** Lake Texoma in Durant, OK, August 1-6. Contact Bob Martin at 2629 Brennan Ct., Plano, TX 75075. 214/596-2016.

**YRUU continental conference:** Camp Grady Spruce in Dallas, TX, August 14-20. Contact The Youth Office at 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108. 617/742-2100.

**Rowe camp and conference center** Rowe, MA, All Summer long! Contact Zita Lazzarini at Kings Highway Rd., Rowe, MA 01367. 413/339-4216.

## YRUU Youth Office Resources

**Synapse** - The continental YRUU newspaper, written by youth and advisors from across the continent and edited and published by the Youth Office. Subscription is free and may be obtained by sending the Youth Office your name, address, phone number, and date of birth. Two issues are published per year.

**Spider** - Produced bimonthly by the YRUU Programs Specialists, the *Spider* provides a communication network for the members of the YRUU Youth Council. It contains reports from Youth Council Representatives from each district, leadership "how-to" articles, and some programming ideas. You can contact your Youth Council Rep. for a copy.

**Youth Advisory** - A newsletter for advisors written by advisors and published by the Youth Office. Subscription is free. Please send your name, address, birthdate, congregation and district to which you belong to the Youth Office. This will also put you on the Youth Advisor Directory.

**Local Youth Group Program Handbook** - A resource for local youth groups covering such topics as organization, fund-raising, games and worship. This handbook is available from the UUA Bookstore for \$2.95.

**Youth Advisors Handbook** - A guide for advisors, the *Youth Advisor's Handbook* addresses the many facets of the adult's unique role in working with youth. This handbook is available from the UUA Bookstore for \$7.95.

**How to be a Con Artist** - A resource for local youth groups and district youth organizations, this publication was produced by the Youth Office. It discusses the steps involved in planning any type of youth conference, from the preplanning stages to the cleaning up of the facilities on Sunday morning. This is an invaluable tool for any youth organization, and is now available from the UUA Bookstore for \$14.95.

**YRUU Policies and Procedures** - A guide to the intricate workings of YRUU on the continental level, containing all policy decisions made by the YRUU Youth Council and Steering Committee since YRUU's inception. Available from the Youth Office on request.

**Leadership Development Conferences** - Members of the Youth Office Staff are available by request to attend district conferences and facilitate leadership development workshops. These workshops are generally for both youth and adults, and address the roles of youth leaders and adult advisors in youth programs. We are only available to run a limited number of such workshops each year and request the sponsoring districts pay half of the travel expenses.

**Letter and Phone Consultation** - The Youth Office Staff are available at any time to consult about any aspect of UU youth activities. If you have problems, questions, or ideas, feel free to write or call us in the office.

**Mailing Lists and Labels** - The Youth Office can print out an address list of youth and advisors in your district or a list grouped by age and/or zip code. Addresses can be printed on paper or on mailing labels. Lists cost \$5.00 per district or \$20.00 for four lists or more. Labels cost an additional five cents per label. Lists will be mailed 3rd class unless otherwise requested (for an additional charge).

# Lookie Here, Folks!

## From the Great White North Comes a New YRUU Programs Specialist!



Good day! My name is Lorne Tyndale and as of Sept. 1st I will be working at the UUA as your new YRUU Programs Specialist. I am extremely excited about this position and hope to bring some of my endless energy, enthusiasm, and perhaps a bit of *northern flare* to the walls of 53 and YRUU. Some of you may remember me from past General Assemblies and Canadian Unitarian Council conferences, but for those who don't know me, I'd like to tell you a little about myself.

Although originally from Montreal, Quebec, I have spent my last seven years living in Calgary, Alberta. I have been involved with the Western Canada District YRUU for the past five years and have been the district's Youth Council Representative for two years. Things I love include playing acoustic guitar, relaxing at outdoor settings (preferably on top of a mountain at sunset), good insightful talks, long walks, listening to music, rain, buying albums (Yeah, only the best - good ol' vinyl... mostly on independent Canadian labels), skiing, reading books, sunshine, writing letters to my MP about government policies (that's Member of Parliament for the uninitiated.), a large mug of strong black coffee, good friends, and YRUU.

I'm really pleased to have been chosen for this position and I can't wait to get to Boston and discover all the challenges that a new city, different country, and YRUU have to offer. I love to chat, so please feel free to either give me a call or drop me a note this fall at the Youth Office.

## A Con Con Allegory

by: Laura Peterson a.k.a. Con Con Dean 1993

It was a pea-green polyester hot pants summer, much like her mother's "Summer of Love" so long ago. Clutching her bar of Lever 2000, she grabbed her numerous handbags and went looking- looking for that perfect bowl of pistachio ice cream. Actually, gelatin or sherbert would more accurately describe the object of her quest. Here's the dramatic foil: she was allergic to ice cream, or some ingredient in it. So in actuality she was looking for something to cure her allergy, or something so wonderful that it was worth dying for.

She got as far as the end of her block when a truck driver type guy offered her a ride. Usually wary of truck drivers ever since the incident at the neighborhood pool where about twenty truckers hijacked the pool and wouldn't let anyone else swim, she put her doubts aside not only because she really needed a ride to Cleveland but also because the electric cross on the grill of the truck told her that this trucker was a trucker from God. Any trucker from God would no doubt be on his or her best behavior, regardless of his or her occupation. So, in disbelief in the eyes of the driver, she piled her numerous handbags (seventeen to be exact) into the cab and smiled. "Let's motor!" she sighed, sinking into the plush fake leather.

The trucker from God was named David. She told him she was Dorothy. He was hauling fifty thousand pounds of canaries, when the truck could only haul forty thousand, so every fifty miles or so, he would get out and bang on the side of the truck to get them flying around. This was supposedly so that they would weigh less. (This is actually against the laws of physics, go watch Newton's Apple on PBS.) She told him she was looking for the perfect bowl of Cream of Wheat. (Never get too personal with strangers.) He said that he went on the same quest once when he was about her age. She asked him if he was allergic to Cream of Wheat. He said no. She asked to be let out at the next weigh station, which of course was closed. The illuminated cross floated off into the night. She thought about how much she hated phoniness.

Dorothy, who now decided her name was Arual, set out for a place to sleep, needing to regain her hit points. She realized she was now in Texas, Paris, Texas to be exact. She knew that she had been here before, or read about it, or saw it in a movie or something. It all looked familiar anyway: a flat vast wasteland surrounding a small shopping center, much like the rest of America. Realizing that she was not likely to find water, much less ice cream anywhere nearby, she dropped her numerous handbags (sixteen to be exact. She left one in the truck.) so as to make better time. She held many titles in track at her neighborhood Y.W.C.A (left over from kinder camp) so she decided to run to the closest Walmart. Her first stop was the customer service desk where she met Jack. Jack was tan and emaciated. He asked if he could help. Knowing that he held no other motive than obligatory service, she freely told him of her quest and her innermost desires for life. He looked up from his crossword puzzle, lit another cigarette (he was a chain smoker) and asked "You really think I care, don't you?"

Arual, now a beautiful princess named Mavis, blinked and responded: "Don't you?" "No." He spit. "You are all the same, looking for something that never exists, some magic potion or cure. You spend all your time running, looking, never stopping to smell the cauliflower. Take it from me, kid, it's better to sleep than to run around like a chicken with your head cut off. Go home. If you don't have a home to go to I know one that's real smooth." He handed her a plane ticket that read to Dallas, August 14 to 20, 1993. She ran back for her bags, finding all but one stolen. The one that remained contained her journal, some leftover food (to feed the armadillos), and some spare underwear. Jack gave her a ride to the airport, which in Paris was incredibly small, and kicked her on board. "God, I gotta do everything for these kids."

If you'd like to meet Dorothy/ Arual/ Mavis, come to Con Con. Look on page 12 for more info on this groovy annual event.



# Passing the Flame

Platforms by the 2 UUA Presidential Candidates

Dear YRUU,

200 words! Hardly enough to express all I hope to do, working with you, to strengthen youth programs throughout the UUA!

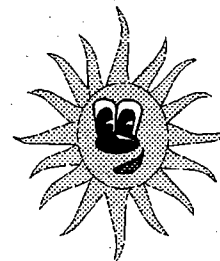
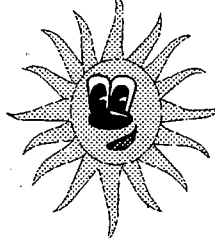
I came into Unitarian Universalism through youth activities: leadership development camp, group advising, helping develop and teach the sexuality curriculum. In the course of my ministry, I've helped to pioneer "coming of age" programs and young adult groups.

It worries me how few UU congregations today even have programs for youth and young adults! We need a major effort to make youth programs a higher priority. We need to train and recruit more advisors. We need innovative programs that reach folks in smaller groups where a *critical mass* of youth can be hard to come by. Above all, youth leadership development must be seen as a part of our whole purpose as an Association.

What I learned from my own UU youth experience is that in a democracy, each of us is a potential leader. *Spiritual leadership is simply having something left over, after taking care of yourself, to begin to care for someone else.* Each of us and each UU congregation can contribute some form of leadership to the larger world.

As President, I'll give serious time to YRUU. I'll work with you on ways to develop your leadership. Opportunities, for example, for young adults to give time in service to others. Oops! Over 200! Blessings!

Rev. John Buehrens



## We Are Our Future

by: Rev. Carolyn S. Owen-Towle

I sense a tremendous vitality and commitment to Unitarian Universalism among youth and young adults as I travel around the continent. It is heartening to reflect on spiritual interests and practical needs you pursue. One of our movement's challenges is to enliven and strengthen connections with you. You represent the future of our faith during the years when you are in school and until you have families of your own and seek religious education for yourselves and children you might have.

I am committed to framing policy and programs responsive to both your needs and gifts. It is essential that our congregations support programs you deem viable and engaging. It is vital that you know how important you are to the life of your congregations.

My earliest connection with Unitarian Universalism was with my children. In the intervening 25 years, I have been involved in writing curricula and teaching R.E. to all ages, including junior highers through *Coming of Age*, high school youth through *Building Bridges* and *About Your Sexuality*, and young adults through regular gatherings for nourishment and discussion.

The power of the church lies in its commitment to intergenerational community. In the spirit of the tribe I strive to draw people of all ages together to build something greater than each could do alone. My leadership is non-hierarchical and takes each of you seriously. It invites your participation. As president, I will meet with your representatives to listen and respond to your needs.

I will encourage all constituencies, including youth and young adults, to communicate your concerns and ideas in partnership with one another. I will propose that our congregations, districts and UUA administration set up a continental computer bulletin board, through which we will build an increasingly interdependent means of communication. I hope that those of you who are enthusiastic

computer operators will be among the primary system workers. I welcome your thoughts and proposals about other ways in which the UUA can intergrade your concerns as well.

The purpose of our faith is to give us the internal strength to go forth in the world to do justice and to love mercy.

We will build diverse religious communities that cultivate cooperation without discrimination where a wide variety of people can work and worship together.

Together we can do it, and we will.

It's time.

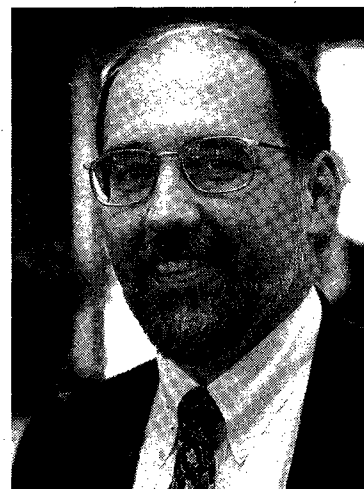






photo by Lisa Savio



## Random Notes

by: Garrett Brown

Forever is a mountain we've yet to climb. We can't do it right, because taking time takes too much time. Standing in this place, I see darkness and light. Babies all say "BBBYYYYAAA!" whether they're black or white. I'm normal, yet different, yet similar, yet the same. People starve and knives carve, yet still you talk of blame. I could quote a million men in love by speaking I love you... but I think the trees, the sky, and our silence will do. Nay, Dr. Seuss is not alive, like him I doubt rhyme. Again, I say that taking time takes too damn much time.

Remember me, receive me, take me inside yourself  
Nobody will know, will they? Will they? They will. People are people and you'll tell them all I'm sure.  
Again I'll fall, don't think I won't, for your sparkling allure.  
Time is of the essence, and I must be on my way.  
I don't know what the essence is, and if I did, I wouldn't say.



I tossed my voice into the crowd.  
The ripples lasted a nanosecond,  
And then I lost them.

I was not on anyone's agendas  
And they'd left their intellectual  
Calendars at home.  
I'm sorry, they say,

You didn't mark it on the  
Calendar.  
I can't have a new idea today.  
No time!  
I'm so busy - you understand, but  
Maybe I can squeeze you in Tuesday  
night.  
Is that an invitation or a dismissal?  
Well...

I tossed my voice into the crowd  
And the ripples may have lasted all  
the way to  
Tuesday night.

by: Miriam Axel-Lute



## The Mountain Climbers

by: Emily Clay

Dream a dream of me  
And a quiet blond man  
Meet me at the mountains  
highest peak  
To climb down together.  
Past a mirror lake  
Whose face  
glimmers in the moonlight.

Silver cloaked branches  
Bending low with solid  
golden fruit  
Brush the face of a man  
Whose eyes are shadowed  
by a shock of golden wheat  
Clouds float past in their  
soft pools.

Hands intertwine  
for the shortest instant  
Blending our universal  
colors into one spectrum.  
The pain is intense,  
but it passes.

We break apart to climb  
the mountain's rocky ledges  
Like a pair of mountain goats,  
We leap from emotion to emotion  
We are children in our gaiety.

Children in their wisdom  
Know how to forget the pain.  
In a sensible world  
of happiness and sunshine,  
Everyone will be a child again

For a moment we stop  
to breathe the air and  
I notice myself  
for the first time and  
Realize I am still alive.

**"The survival of our planet depends  
on breaking down the dividing walls of  
nation and class, race and sex, religion  
and political ideology... seeing our-  
selves, above all our other identities, as  
one body and members of another."  
-Barbara A. Gerlach**

Live a  
I've created artificial  
inside my comp  
it's for a scient  
I need G  
that can

I wrote them  
But I don't teach the  
They teach themselves  
when food is in  
when they sho  
when they need  
They teach me  
that time and s  
that communiti  
That you can commit  
if you're  
of your  
They try to escape  
Why would they want  
There's nothing outsi  
of their I  
no

There's no reason to  
there's just not  
I should  
I made i  
I changed them so th  
I had to build c  
in the name of  
I couldn't find the par  
that was makin  
I know I didn't write  
They wanted it that u  
I feel guilty

By: Ben Stallings

Allow the ear to hea  
the eye to see what it  
the nose to smell wh  
the mouth to say wh  
the body to enjoy wh  
and the mind to thir  
-From a selection by Ya





photo by Lisa Savio

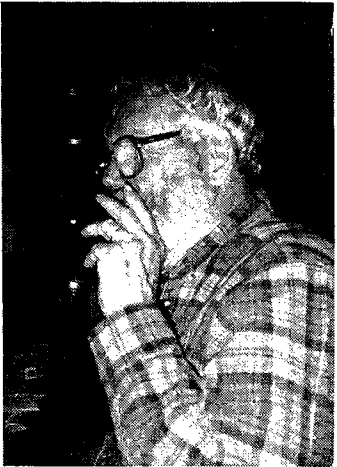
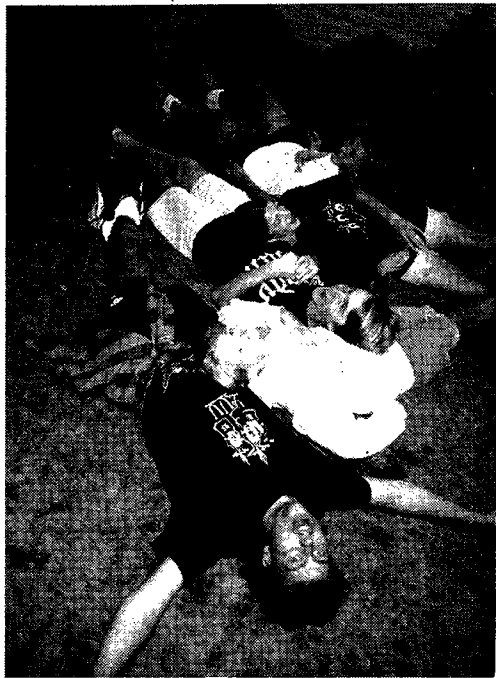
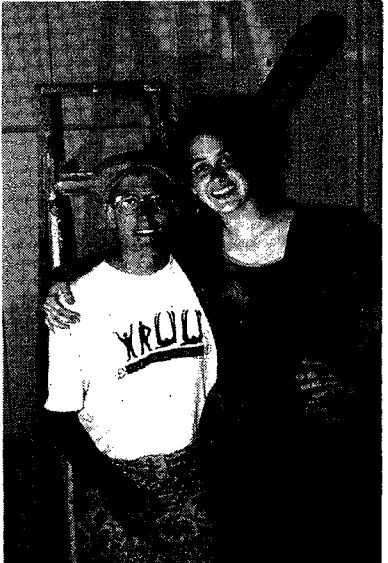


photo by Jory Agate

photo by Jill Hubner



Learn  
er  
project  
ea pigs  
ll me all their secrets

It's treasured like a heart  
Beaten like a drum  
Given passionately  
not without revolution.

It's given not a second thought  
Taken as for granted,  
as the sun,  
as the rain.  
No one knows what it means.

Freedom  
That's what it is-  
Flying south as  
the air gets cold  
Leaving the house,  
slamming the door  
smoking pot on the stars  
moon gazing in the daylight.  
Laying in a field during school  
That's what it is.  
Freedom.

by: Dansey Lewis

rtant  
mate  
mpangy  
ce are illusions  
are necessary  
ss incest  
ssing two words  
gram code

escape?  
the edges  
e world  
ng at all  
over the edge  
g out there  
ow

can't escape  
ge around them  
ence  
if the program  
hem do it  
t part

at it likes,  
s,  
likes,  
likes,  
likes,  
hat it likes.

May truth always light our way

### The Issue

Monday morning, the doctor mends a mindless brain  
and consoles the patient with a smile that rarely fails;  
Friday night, weary, his strength he must feign,  
and goes home to the little, white lines he inhales.  
Man and woman united in a love without compare  
while jealous neighbors can only fancy;  
This they secretly deny as she, in despair,  
questions his evening with their friend Nancy.  
He as do others considers his parental concern  
to be without question rather loving and fine;  
Oh, from her father his eldest does learn  
the joys of a morning anesthetic called wine.  
A man who cares for his business with high esteem  
and stands by his creed that only the strong survive,  
Fixes his taxes, teaching his son that making the team  
made the bribes on his math teacher all worthwhile.  
Charity is feeding hundreds of hungry people  
on thousand plate dinners in a party convention hall,  
Yet, he passes a vagrant beneath the church steeple  
and refuses to ease his pleading call.  
The religious congregation where he pledges support  
considers him a model of moral demeanor,  
Yet his attendance at church is of a different sort--  
as a haven for business and a good social humor.  
The monkeys in their cages remarked with pity,  
for today he was made head of  
the family values committee.  
by: Laura Raitman

"As an artist, I have  
found there is a point  
where the line be-  
tween myself and the  
people I draw breaks  
down, when their ex-  
perience becomes  
part of me and  
touches mine."

- Barbara A. Gerlach

### Bricks of Red Rain

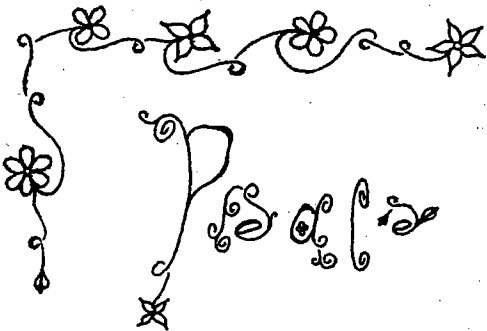
by: Kyle Schlesinger

Bricks are clear  
thin and light  
tanned up on the sun  
and rest for the night  
and shine like glass  
on the windows of streets  
handshakes and hard ons  
and the people who meets  
firestacks and smokey  
on a piano of tunes  
bricks are clear  
and the raindrops red  
in a city so starved  
can't give me no bread  
and little shops close  
as their lights roll  
down low  
pass red rain  
to another new road  
and it's a long trail down  
and a longer one back  
don't stop for coffee  
when the trains on the track  
Roads of red rain  
everything's what you  
make it  
can't change that  
can't change a tire  
can't change your name  
can't shrink a picture  
can't build a frame  
no matter how ya see it  
it's all covered in rain.

### Bored in a Library

by: Mark Goldberg

& now I want to sleep  
not to read, because I  
can't  
find the right book,  
the "me" book  
& I can't read my poetry  
because I know how it  
ends, who done it,  
I done it, & maybe I ain't  
done all I right about,  
but I've felt it, wanted it,  
needed it in my life,  
or had it in a form I  
couldn't recognize,  
& I could only see it as what  
I wrote about, but that's  
metaphor, and that's writing,  
& that's life



graphics by Caroline Schnieders



### Twilight of Sleep

As the shadows set  
Over my face,  
I await in nocturnal bliss.  
Night is a maiden beckoning repose  
As I wait for a lip-numbing kiss.  
A warm smog envelops me here.  
The direction I float is unknown.  
My soul seems to gyrate  
My mind, It dilates  
I drift in a weightless, amicable zone.  
by: Wenis Christ

photo by Neil Laslett





About this page... Around the time of Synapse layout, we tried to think of fun and educational uses for the pages herein. As writers, we are eternally dependent on letters to form our thoughts, and this page is in tribute to that fact. Additionally, this page serves as an educational tool for all of our constituents. Alphabets are the first thing learned by school children in most cultures, and though most people retain that knowledge, we thought it couldn't hurt to refresh a bit! All right!!!  
(all photos this page, by Sean Ramsey)

**B**e ours a religion which, like sunshine, goes everywhere; it's temple, all space; it's shrine, the good heart; it's creed, all truth; it's ritual, works of love; it's profession of faith, divine living.  
-Theodore Parker

**C**an you remember what you were doing in 1983? Could be that you were between 6 and 10. Certainly, you had by that time eaten many a bowl of Cheerios. Coincidentally, a cheery occasion was taking place for YRUU. Collaborating with one another, YRUUers were Celebrating Common Ground.

**D**own below are flowers. Don't think for a moment that they have nothing to do with the alphabet. Directly the opposite, actually. Daisies and daffodils as those below develop in droves of 26 (give or take a few), which is the number of letters in the ABC's!

**E**ating eggplant expands everyone's efficiency. Elegant executives eat eggplants erratically, enlarging errors. Embarking explorers engorge eggplant expediently, enhancing each's elemental energy.

**F**orget your name. Forget your watch on the bathroom sink. Forget your age and your occupation. Fall quickly from your image and find out what the bare "you" feels like. Form a little circle with your fingers and look through it at the fuzz under your belly.

**G**enerally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand. -Margery Williams

**H**ippopotomus, herein lies your ode. Ode to the Hippo; how bright shine eyes of hazel, how fine doth the heavy toed foot grind seeds of parched corn? Ah, heathenish hippo, have mercy upon the sinful minds of visitors; bare not thy stout teeth of ivory; tempt not the human mind to ponder the wonders of your rounded jaw.

**I**s it right that people should not have the use of land when it is considered to belong to others who are not cultivating it? Is it true that people should not use articles needful to satisfy their requirements, if those articles are the property of other people?



**J**olly is Jennifer. Jennifer sits across from me in the juniper office, her fingers are jumping around on her keyboard. Jelly beans jumbled in Jen's tummy on Easter. January was the month Jen and I started working together. Jen likes the letter "J" because there are more people with "J" names than any other.

**K**raut, Sour grows in the garden; it's actually cabbage that's marinated and fermented in a process that produces and retains vitamin C, which was useful when traveling on boat trips, or when living in a climate that didn't produce citrus fruits. Kelp grows at the bottom of the ocean. With the fish.



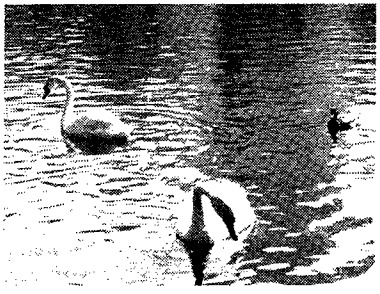
**L**ove and Life are the most common "L" words. Let's not even pretend to wonder why. Being alive, breathing, looking, Loving. Love and Life. When it comes down to it, that's why we're here. Love life. Live love.

**M**any years ago, Melvin the Mongoose was on his way to a party. "My God", Melvin said, "I forgot my oranges!" Most readers understand, Mongooses named Melvin eat oranges with their mustard. Mustard, of course, was the theme for the party.

**N**ow then, the following passage does not begin with an "N", but it's darn good. 'Our lives speak the truth as we see it far more directly than our words can. In this sense our lives are the most authentic answers that we can give to the question, "Why do we do what we do?" ' ---  
-Rich Miller

**O**nce upon a time, Ophelia the Orangutan was on her way to a party. "Oh no", Ophelia said, "I forgot my mustard!" One must understand, Orangutans named Ophelia eat mustard with their oranges. Oranges, of course, were the theme for the party.

**P**ut a party hat on your head and pray. Piddle in a parking lot under a pink neon sign that flashes "PARTS". Parachute over petunia petals to pester your paranoia. Pour cement over your toes, and play hopscotch with your mind. Pray for Love and Life.

**Q**uaIntly quivering...  
  
...quietly quacking.

**R**ain under your fingernails. Rain rippling along the underwater bellies of ancient crustaceans. Rain in heavy drops freckling an upturned breast. Rain over grateful bare toes in an overflowing gutter. Rain in the eyes of a quick-blinking sparrow. -Rahima's Child

**S**he is my passion. Steeped in my addiction; I watch pictures carefully, testing to see if I could recognize her from every angle. She is my treat, my extravagance. Sacred space, deep and bright, I seek her in the glowing caverns of honest obsession. She is my sanctity and my friend  
-Simplicity Jones


**T**he equality of the capitalist and of the worker is like the equality of two fighters, one of whom has his arms tied whilst the other has weapons, but to both of whom certain rules are applied with strict impartiality while they fight.  
-Tolstoy

**U**nder your speck of dirt, check to see if there is any perfume. Umpires will have the same fragrant blossom of soil as the undulating armpits of ballerinas. Uncle Blane's corporate shoes may even leave a smudge of pleasant earth scent on the most prudish white carpet. Unveil the stubbly brown buddha smell all around your grainy garden onions. -Uma Me

**V**ery voracious is the appetite of Vernon. Vernon is a velvety vole from 1874 (a vintage year). Veal is the victim of Vernon's veritable crevice of a stomach. Varying with the seasons, vivacious Vernon visits veal vats every even day of the week.

**W**hy do people fear death so? Because they realize, unconsciously at least, that their lives are mere parodies of what living should be. They ache to quit playing at living and to really live, but, alas, it takes time and trouble to piece the loose ends of their lives together and they are dogged by the notion that time is running out. -Tom Robbins, Even Cowgirls Get The Blues

**X** is a letter which, to my mind, should not eksist. First of all, 'X' can be replaced efficiently and sensibly with 'KS' (i.e. eksplain, eksit, ekschange). Secondly, 'X' is often the tool used by people to make perfectly respectable words into ghoulish jokes, such as turning the word 'thanks' into the lamentable 'thanx', or 'socks' into the slanderous 'sox'.

**Y**onder youth  
  
yodelling

**Z**esty zealot Zed and zany zoologist Zachariah announced their engagement on national Tzar day last month. Zounds, what news! Zed is the young gentleman who discovered Zoro's secret identity, of course, and Zach is well known for his recent invention of the Z-chromosome. Zippity-doo-dah, that'll be some Bond of Union!



# Social Action... Galloping Forwards



**13 Reasons Why My Bike is Better than My Car**  
(by Fiona Thomson, mostly taken w/ permission from 'Bicycle Threat'.)

1. My bike is cheaper.
2. My bike smells better when it's moving on the road.
3. My bike doesn't use gasoline and force me to fork over money to nasty oil companies.
4. My bike is smaller.
5. My bike allows me to exercise while I travel.
6. My bike lets me go down the sidewalk against the flow of traffic to escape from the cops.
7. My bike lets me experience the environment I'm traveling through.
8. My bike used fewer resources to build.
9. Nobody can hide in the back of my bike and then jump out and scare me.
10. My bike doesn't encourage the creation of more freeways and parking lots.
11. I can carry my bike upstairs.
12. My bike is less likely to run over small furry creatures or bigger not-so-furry ones.
13. My bike is pretty- My car is a piece of **Bureaucratic Pollution!**

On April 25th, 1993, youth gathered for the annual March On Washington, which was focused this year on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Rights. We stayed at the Mt. Vernon UU Church in Alexandria, VA. At the time this blurb is being written, however, this event hasn't taken place yet. The date now is April 8th. But by the time Synapse is edited, printed, and distributed, it will be past April 25th, and the March will be a news item. You can see the bind I'm in. Here is a list of possible reviews that *could* be true after the March...

We had a great time!! Over a hundred youth came from around the continent and we made a beautiful banner and Marched 'till the sun went down!!!

or

It started raining the moment we left Sunday morning to start Marching, then our paper towel that said "YRUU" ripped when the two youth who showed up started to fight over it.

or

Things were going well, we were Marching and forming a happy LGB YRUU community, when out of the sky came these bright lights, green and blue. When we regained consciousness, we were in a lesbian alien cruise ship, and at the controls were unlikely lovers Janis Joplin and Shirley Temple!

## Driving into Womanhood

My only time alone is in the car.  
I reflect on today and conclude  
it is the moon making me want to  
Cry out.  
It is the rust spots on my Oldsmobile  
my birth control pills  
my poem

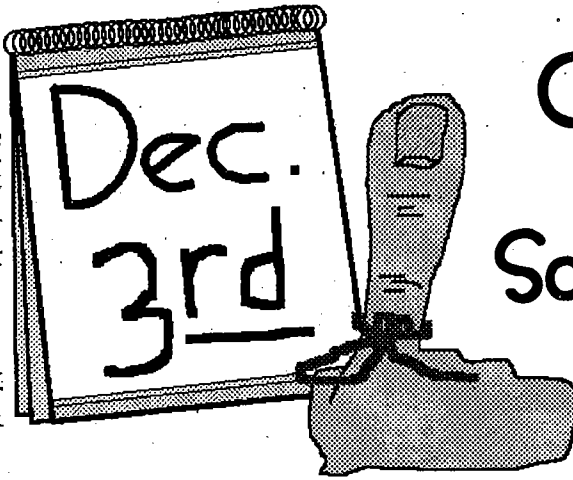
The fluids in my body have overheated  
blood coursing  
saliva dried up  
ovaries releasing eggs  
uterus retaining blood  
hormones imbalanced  
as I drive through the city before dark.  
But the moon is out-  
Full, swollen, ready to bleed.  
My carburetor is leaking.

I hate angst  
I revel in this madness  
I put on my turn signal for left-  
I want to quit school and experience  
wild mind  
let this womb fill up once and hold it for  
9 months  
stare at the sun and not burn my eyes  
get the engine grease out from under my  
fingernails

This is not about sex but  
My youth is crying out for satisfaction.  
Statistics say that homosexual youth are  
twice as likely to commit suicide.  
I don't want to be dead but  
grappling with this confusion is wearing my belts thin.  
In my rear view mirror I see the headlights  
behind me getting much too close,  
a life agenda sneaking up.

Pulling into my own parking spot I know I have to  
return to my room where the moon is controlling  
the 75% water in my roommate's bodies.  
No one there is sure who they love or  
How they love  
And my womb and the moon are going to make the  
Tension rise with the tide and  
I turn off the car.

-Justina C. Prenatt



## Continental Social Action Day???

What's so special about December 3rd? Well, wouldn't you know it, Steering Committee had another of their **new-fangled notions** (much to the delight of ol' Serinky-Binky-Bottle-of-Inky). (That's serena... me...) So, let me lay the concept on you pals, feel this out.

Picture if you will, a widespread group of amazing, aware, active people (that's you). Suddenly, simultaneously (on December 3rd, perhaps...?), they break through the bonds that hold them, flailing their wild arms, stamping in loud thronged masses, singing at the top of their lungs, and **MAYBE FINALLY TELLING THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE HOW THEY FEEL!!!!** Sorry pals, got a little excited.

Anyway, the basic plan is that every local or district group of youth is encouraged to select an issue of social justice (social, political, environmental, whatever), and then **act on that issue on December 3rd**.

Why do this???

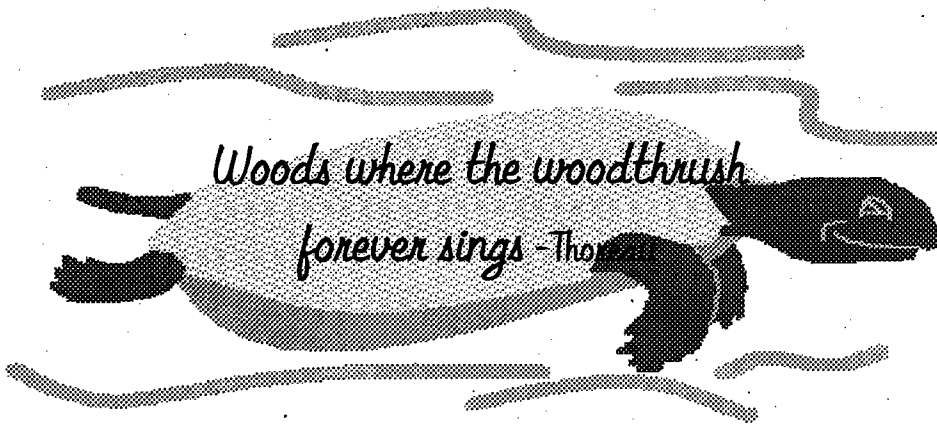
**-United We Stand.** Often when a group is planning an action, they feel like they are fighting an impossible battle. Youth Groups can experience the feeling that their social action is a mere token to onlookers, as opposed to an effective force for change in the community. As part of a continental movement, however, youth can have the knowledge that they are not alone, that on this day people everywhere are being made aware of issues of "social justice". If someone tries to just look away, we'll make sure they see another group, **WE CAN GIVE THE CLOSE-MINDED AND THE REPRESSIVE NO WAY TO IGNORE US!!!** Sorry, got a bit excited.

**-Media Coverage.** I know, I know, the media is the cause of many great negative trends in society, but it remains an effective way of getting information and ideas to a large number of people. Ever noticed a reluctance in the local news stations to cover your Annual Peanut Butter Cookie Bake-sale Benefit for the Homeless? Well, to some people (god knows why), that's considered small news. However, if your Annual Peanut Butter Cookie Bake-sale Benefit for the Homeless was part of a continental movement of youth standing up for what they believe in, Yup, it would be big news!

**-Get YRUUs off their butts and in the streets!** That's right, some are of the opinion that UUsers are too much Talk and not enough Walk! Having a continental "day" devoted to action (not discussion, not meditation, but action!) will most likely inspire youth groups to put theory into practice and start making some changes. And personally, I think that changes made by all the hundreds of groups of YRUU people will be good ones!

**Please send comments on this idea for the next Synapse, talk about it in your groups, etc. If all approve, put December 3rd up on your calender in big red letters, and start making some signs and banners!**

**POLITICS IS FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE A PASSION FOR CHANGING LIFE.  
BUT LACK A PASSION FOR LIVING IT** - BONANZA JELLYBEAN



## Opening the Door

by: Galen Gibson

\*\*\*\*\*

The upstairs bunkbed,  
Where the high thoughts  
Trip over themselves,  
That's where I start.  
The thoughts are  
feverish triangles  
That are sparked in the  
stuffy room.

I leave them behind.  
The organized,  
Boxy books,  
On their rectangular  
shelves,  
Box me in.

The old wool blanket,  
Woven into warped  
Woofing grids,  
Then folded into  
scratchy cubes;  
I leave them behind.

Downstairs and out the  
door.  
It's cool there;  
Nothing's in the hall.  
But I go in.

It's as simple as that,  
The little electric heaters  
With their square-cage  
faces  
And helical glowing  
coils,  
Begin to steam me up,  
So I leave, out the door.

The cracked asphalt  
Is a welcome chaos,  
As the chilled street  
Supports my feet.

Already,  
Among the random

Branches  
Of the trees  
The heat is being undone.

My feet labour, my legs  
work  
To fade the white facade.  
And the house's white  
angular trim.  
Of clapboard and shingle,  
Dwindles and fades.  
The winds cool my head.

The hot sun moves,  
From behind the clouds,  
As I enter the graveyard,

The rows of granite,  
Chiseled and aligned  
Hurt to look at.

The trees behind the  
graveyard provide,  
Some shade  
Behind origami fold  
leaves,  
And solace  
From the lines  
Of the sun's merciless  
rays,  
And a path,  
Twisting and faded,  
That leads to the sea.

Down to the sea,  
On the rocky coast  
Where listless ripples  
Of cold blue  
Kiss the shattered shards  
of granite  
And the spot that burns  
Is chilled  
And my thoughts  
My doors  
Are open again  
To the sky.

# In Loving Memory of Galen C. Gibson

Galen Gibson, a former YRUUer and friend to all who knew him,  
was shot to death in the library at Simon's Rock College of Bard  
in Great Barrington, MA on December 14, 1992



Photo of Galen Gibson taken in the Spring of 1992 at Simon's Rock College

## I Remember...

### thoughts from friends

"He was a really caring,  
very intelligent person,  
a terrific person to be around.  
This is such a loss."

-Shilo Frontierro

It was a delight to watch him, to  
listen to him and his intergalactic spirit.  
The world is way too full of weeping  
for any of us to understand, and now  
our hearts are full of weeping.

Rev. Wendy Fitting

"Galen was sitting on a rocking chair,  
and a big crowd of other young people  
were gathered around him talking about  
physics. I don't think they were all that  
interested in physics. They were inter-  
ested in whatever Galen wanted to talk  
about." - Russ Savage

"He was a sparkle in our lives,  
a different kind of character -  
a philosopher, a logician."

- Charles Symonds, principal at  
Gloucester High School, MA

galen wanted to do everything. He  
wanted to be a scientist, then an  
architect, then be in the theater. He  
was happy being stressed and busy.  
He talked to everyone. He liked  
everyone, and everyone liked him.  
A former classmate of Galen's

"He would philosophize about anything -  
politics, history, religion. He liked  
to find out what other people thought."  
- Scott Carlson, physics teacher at  
Gloucester High School, MA



"Bit by bit, nevertheless, it comes over us that we shall never again  
hear the laughter of our friend, that this one garden is forever locked  
against us. And at that moment begins our true mourning, which,  
through it may not be rending, is yet a little bitter. For nothing, in truth,  
can replace that companion. Old friends cannot be created out of hand.  
Nothing can match the treasure of common memories, of trials endured  
together, of quarrels and reconciliation and generations and generous  
emotions. It is idle, having planted an acorn in the morning, to expect  
that afternoon to sit in the shade of the oak."

From Wind, Sand, and Stars by: Antoine de Saint-Expery

**Friends and family have established a memorial fund for Galen.**  
Contributions can be sent to the Galen Gibson Memorial Fund, care of  
Gloucester Cooperative Bank, Middle Street, Gloucester, MA 01930.

# YRUU School

## You Gotta Believe!

-By Jeanna Steele (92-93 YRUU Steering Committee)

"Hey, wouldn't it be neat to start a UU school?" One hears this phrase at conferences or youth groups, or just hanging out, at least once during the time spent in YRUU. You hear it coupled with a kind of wistful tone apparent in the voice. S/He looks up into space and mouths those words: UU School.

We always say it as if it is an impossibility. A dream, never to be realized in our lifetime, if ever. Why is this? Does it just sound too good to be true? The reason everyone talks about it so often is because there are a million good reasons for having one! Doesn't it always seem that when you talk about it, all you hear is, "Well, that certainly is a great idea, but it will never happen. Be Practical."? If practicality means denying our dreams, why should we "be practical"?

Can you imagine learning in an environment in which your beliefs were encouraged in your daily actions? Where you were allowed to question, to disagree, to exchange ideas, to apply your beliefs as well as what you were learning?

How might your life have been different if where you went every morning was a place where you grew, while contributing to creating a community on earth, as well as within yourself.

How might your life have been different if there had been a place for you. A place to go... a place of people on a quest for justice, equity and compassion... a place where you were encouraged in your beliefs, in which you were respected and supported in your longing to question. A place where your inner truth was nurtured and affirmed. Might your life have been different?

My little brother is in elementary school right now and it bothers me that we send him to a place every day where he learns sexism, racism, and heterosexism...and when he comes home I'm going to unteach those things. My brother's life would be different if he could be educated in a setting where prejudice and fear did not rule the classroom.

Imagine a place where there were role models for lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. A place where "queer" wasn't an insult and Sam's two moms weren't weird but natural and wonderful. A place where a kid wouldn't have to feel shame for being different.

The principles of Unitarian Universalists must have something worthwhile about them, given the number of people who identify themselves as UU. If we believe in our purposes and principles, is it so impossible to create a place where we live them?

There's been a lot of talk about diversity floating around UU circles. Maybe some of the reason we are lacking in diversity is because we don't believe in ourselves. If we don't live our beliefs, why should any one else want to become UU? We cannot be half-hearted about what we believe. I'm not.

I disagree with a lot of the hierarchy built into our religion, and I disagree with the pseudo-intellectual attitude which pervades our congregations, but I do believe in our principles. If we believe we have something wonderful to share with our children and with children in the community, why not do something about it? We can offer what we believe and allow it to be challenged and perhaps changed. Let us be unafraid to put the task of questioning into our children's hands.

Some would like to call spreading our beliefs missionary work. I would respond with a call to stand up for what you believe. If others follow, maybe it's a good idea, maybe not. When you stand up for what you believe, people are going to criticize you, and perhaps some of the things you thought were right will be wrong. We need not be so afraid to put ourselves on the line and to face criticism. Maybe we need to "evolve" a little and serve the community, not just ourselves, and maybe this will mean taking some risks.

This world has got to start changing, and we can lead the fight! Is that being missionaries? If it is, then maybe I am one. I believe in what I feel and I believe that others would too if they were exposed to these ideas. I have faith in others to decide for themselves.

Our lives could be different if there had been a place where we could go to live our beliefs. A place where we had to take a look at our beliefs every day and evaluate whether they were serving us and others to their greatest ability. Is it really so scary to put our beliefs on the line where they might be tested? Maybe, but perhaps these beliefs would give youth a safe nurturing space to live for what they feel and to decide for themselves what beliefs best serve them.

For all of you dreaming about a UU school I affirm you. Yes, it's a good idea! Yes, you can do it. Yes, it is a dream that can be realized. If you believe in it, say so often, and louder! Talk about the advantages and disadvantages of having a school. Troubleshoot, write your ideas, send them to the Youth Office, send them to your friends, send them to the new president of the UUA.

When both candidates running for President of the UUA were asked about a school, they both replied that there wasn't enough money. This is an easy way to dismiss the dream but not a completely convincing one. Convince them that it is possible, for the simple reason that you want it, that you need it. If we believe in it, it can happen. If you build it they will come. I affirm you. It can happen. Dream, talk, scream your beliefs and be confident in them. You are empowered to do so. YES! \*\*



### Heart Beats

Heart  
Beats  
Lying in wait  
On a summer's day  
Quick  
Breaths  
Lost in fog  
Of primal desire  
Vieion  
Blurs  
Your clean, sharp face  
In silver cloude  
Racing  
Mind  
A deluge of whatifs  
Spatters my hopes  
Reaching  
Dreams  
Exceeding my grasp  
A wisp of Heaven

Mark Goldberg

### Good News....

The 92-93 YRUU Steering Committee met March 25-28, and guess what subject came up? That's right! The idea of starting our very own splendid, glorious School! The executive body of our organization (that's the Steering Committee again!) was incredibly thrilled at the prospect, and several people from Steering Committee are truly dedicated to working for the school's foundation!

In addition to the members of the committee, the Youth Office Staff (that's Serena and Jen!) was directed to put bundles of energy into the idea as well. We've already begun scouting out land possibilities, and making contact with other interested parties. Yeah!!

### WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- Send Information on groups that give Grants
- Send us any leads on land (it needs to be farmable)
- Send funky articles on alternative education
- Give us input on the overall idea... do you like it? No? Yes? (we'll keep a discourse on the idea going here in Synapse)
- Send us your names and addresses to be kept on a list of "interested people"



contact the youth office at  
(617)742-2100, x351, 352  
25 Beacon St.  
Boston MA, 02108





So Much Fun...  
So Little Time

## Searching For a New YRUU Programs Specialist

The YRUU Programs Specialist position is a one year internship for youth working at the UUA headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts. The new YRUU Programs Specialist will work with the other YRUU Programs Specialist and the Director of Youth Programs to manage the day to day business of Young Religious Unitarian Universalists. Responsibilities include: editing and laying out the YRUU newspaper *Synapse*; managing the continental YRUU office at 53 Beacon St., Boston, MA; planning and administering conferences and youth gatherings, participating in meetings, implementing decisions of the YRUU Youth Council and Steering Committee, and traveling to district and local groups for outreach.

This position is a one year commitment, beginning January 1, 1994 and ending December 31, 1994. The stipend is \$16,000 per year. Moving expenses to and from Boston are paid, but the new intern is expected to find his/her own living accommodations, as well as, pay for all living expenses while in Boston.

### How To Apply

To apply, please write to the Youth Office at: 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108 for an application kit. Applications must be postmarked by **September 15, 1993** to be considered. Call the Youth Office at (617) 742-2100 if there are any questions concerning the application process.

It's None Other Than...



## The 14th Annual Youth Conference on Disarmament and Development

United Nations, New York City  
November 18th-21st, 1993

26 UU young people, ages 15-17, will be chosen to attend this conference. They will meet knowledgeable and experienced professionals, including the staff of the UU-UN Office, YRUU Director and Programs Specialists from the UUA Youth Office, Representatives from Missions to the United Nations and Speakers from the United Nations.

Participants will: **LEARN** about the UN, the UU-UNO Office, Disarmament and Development from a global perspective; **SHARE** techniques and ideas for effective action on social justice issues; **MEET** people with similar ideas.

If you need more information or applications contact The Youth Office at 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108. 617/742-2100. For travel and program questions, contact the UU-UNO Office, 777 UN Plaza, #7D, New York City, NY 10017 212/986-5165.

### Dearest Ben Stallings,

We, the editors, sincerely apologize for our horrific goof. We really enjoyed your poem, all of your poem, in the Fall/ Winter edition of *Synapse*. I just wish we were not the only ones who were fortunate enough to read the last line from *SWUUSI* 1992, "The world will see us." In the spirit, - the Editors



"If there is a bed-rock principle underlining the First Amendment, it is that the government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable."

-US Supreme Court Justice William Brennan in response to the 1990 Texas flag burning case.



John Harvey and Betsy Nolan harmonizing to "Oh I Wish I Was a Little Bar of Soap" Hmmm...

## Youth Caucus at General Assembly 1993



**History:** At the 1974 General Assembly in NYC, UU youth who were in attendance decided to form their own caucus in order to work within the denomination to voice their needs and concerns. The Youth Caucus has developed into a strong, well organized group of people who are listened to and respected at General Assembly.

**GA 1993:** This year, General Assembly will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, June 24-29, 1993, and we're expecting a great turnout. The youth will be staying at a hotel within a couple of blocks from the convention center. As usual, the Youth Office will have three UUA staff members and an adult advisor stay in youth housing to give assistance to anyone who may need it. Youth Caucus incorporates the ages of 14 to 22.

**Registration:** Youth don't have to stay in youth housing to participate in Youth Caucus. Youth Housing is a wonderful (and inexpensive) opportunity for youth between the ages of 14 and 22 to share in the spirit of General Assembly with other youth. However, if youth choose not to stay in Youth Housing they are still welcomed to participate in Youth Caucus. **ALL YOUTH MUST REGISTER FOR GA.** The GA Office handles all registration.

### For More Information

For more information on Youth Caucus, Youth Housing or a Youth Caucus Scholarship form, contact the Youth Office at 25 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02108 (617) 742-2100 ext. 350, 351, 352. For a GA registration form please contact the General Assembly Office at the same address and phone number as above.

## YRUU Continental Conference

"the end of the beginning"

August 14-20, 1993

Camp Grady Spruce

Possum Kingdom Lake, TX

This year's Con Con theme is a recognition of the fact that we are moving through the phases of development as an organization. We have completed our first ten years, the years of formation, and we are ready to look at the next ten, the years of action, outreach, new light... This Con Con will be a time to roll up our sleeves, lift up our spirits, and embrace the future!

## YRUU T-Shirts

### Get Them While You Can

If you like what you see and want to have one for your very own, or your youth group would like some for a fund raiser, call or write to the Youth Office and we'll tell you where you can find such a stylin' t-shirt.

The beautifully designed t-shirt logo was drawn by a Margaret Ladner a YRUUer from Ijamsville, Maryland and it celebrates the tenth anniversary of YRUU, which became an official organization on January 1, 1983.

All shirts are available in white 100% cotton t-shirts and they come in Lrg. and X-Lrg. sizes only.



### Haiku

by: Mark Goldberg

I want to write haikus  
but that's already too long  
and so's that  
the last one might have made it  
and this is already too much  
like my life in the past  
but negating the past  
not enough like I want my life to be  
like a haiku  
in the moment  
of the moment  
like now  
but not like then  
and not like that  
but just like this ☐