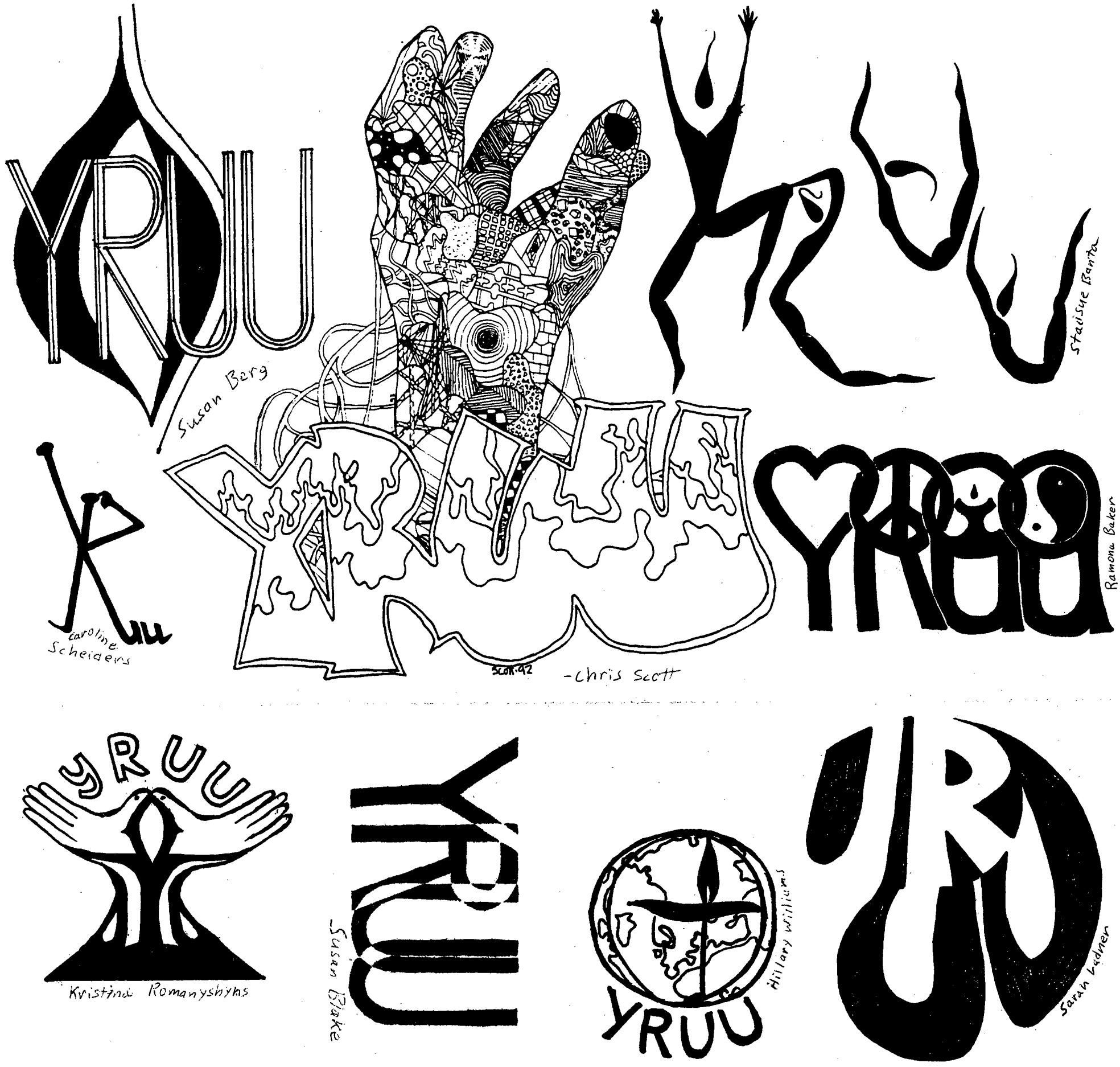



*A Point of
Contact Where
Energy and In-
formation are
Exchanged.*

Synapse

Continental Newspaper of the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists!

Volume X7, Issue
2, Winter 1993 -
1994. Printed on
Recycled Paper in
the usa.



<p>I Love It! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I really think that the <i>Synapse</i> editors are doing a great job, and so here's a container of Ben & Jerry's to show my appreciation!</p>	<p>Trim It! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Hey - for some unknown reason I'm getting more than one copy of this mag. Please only send it to the address below. Thanks!</p>	<p>I've Moved! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Hey - I no longer live at 24 Sussex Dr., so could you please change my address? Here's the update. Thanks!</p>	<p>Here's My Favorite Picture of Myself!</p>	<p>My three favorite things are...</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p>
<p>I'm Gone! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I no longer need <i>Synapse</i>. Please remove my name from your mailing list.</p> <p>Change It! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I think that <i>Synapse</i> is really great, but it would be nice if my address was correct. Here's the corrections for your database.</p> <p>Add Me! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Hey - I think <i>Synapse</i> is just the best, coolest, greatest publication around but I don't get it. Here is my name, address, and birthday for your mailing list. Please add me!</p>	<div><p>YRUU at the UUUA 25 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02108</p></div> <div><p>NonProfit Organization U.S. POSTAGE PAID BOSTON, MASS Permit No. 8652</p></div>			

Letters to those Editors!

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 may be withheld upon request. Thanks!
- The Editors.

Dear Synapse,

Your publication brings me joy that I can not describe, however I am puzzled by one thing. I don't believe I've ever seen an article (save the disarmament one a few months back), poem, story, or personal note from anyone west of Kentucky, and being in Missouri myself I feel kinda left out.

I think it would be just creamy if you guys up there in MA, NY, NJ, and all the other north eastern states attempt to get in touch with us and maybe even ask us to write some articles or stories for Synapse from our world.

I really think it would be a great way to bring the UU community closer together. - David Low

Dear David,

Thank you for your input. We are extremely pleased to hear that Synapse brings you indescribable joy - it's great to hear that people appreciate the time, thought, and effort which is put in by each and every person who works on Synapse.

As for getting more input into Synapse, we think it's a great idea! We try to publish work by YRUU youth from all over the continent in each issue, and we feel that we do a reasonably good job at this, however we are limited in what we publish by what is submitted. Synapse is a newspaper written by and for YRUU youth. Anyone may submit their work to Synapse, and everyone is encouraged to do so! The more material we receive from around the continent, the more can be printed, thus resulting in a newspaper which is representative of the diversity that is out there. - The Editors

Everything You Need to Know About Synapse... But Were Afraid to Ask

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 per annum.

YRUU Staff: Serena Smallin, Lorne Tyndale, 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. When submitting photographs, please include the name of the person who took the photo to provide proper credit. 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 / Photographs: 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. Contact the Youth Office for specific rates for your organization.

Submission and Advertising Due Date for Next Issue: March 15, 1994.



Dearest Editors,

I always treasure receiving Synapse. I truly savor the rush of excitement it brings. So much beauty and energy in a few (too few) pages. I was moved when I read the letter from Sarah Arnott in Raleigh, NC. It's a wonderful feeling when someone grasps what one is trying to convey. And maybe, Sarah, we will meet.

With fondness and a Big Wet Kiss for all those who have contributed.
- Miranda Murray, Mont Vernon, NH.

Dear Miranda,

Thanks for your kind words. We too feel that Synapse brings a rush of excitement. Sort of like when you go on a really big roller-coaster at an amusement park, get to the top of that first long climb, and the car just lets go... Gravity at it's best! - The Editors



Dear Synapse,

I got a copy of Synapse at Tulsa the last rally I went to (which was cool) and I stashed it with my stuff.

I went home and when I started reading I thought COOL! I didn't know anything could rock this much! - Sara Stevenson, Tulsa, OK

Dear Sara,

Gee, Thanks! Keep those tunes cranked for us! - The Editors



Dear Synapse,

This always happens. I get Synapse and I'm all happy and inspired to write to you guys and then WHAM - I got bothered or interrupted or something and the letter never gets out. Sigh. But this time is different, because I just finished reading that "groovy mag" and I'm writing NOW!

Reasons for my writing are multiple ... to tell y'all how much I like getting Synapse, and to tell you how it's a good thing that I don't depend on Synapse for GA registration stuff, 'cause I got it today, which is more than a week after all registration deadlines ... but you're not to blame - third-class mail is notoriously slow.

Also, I wanted to say some stuff to people who wrote in this issue (Spring / Summer '93). I frequently find myself wanting to do this, and I'm never sure which section to do it in, since the addresses (for direct responses) are never published. Does this fit into Letters to the Editor? Personals? Poetry? Anyway, I dunno if there's interest, but I'd sure write for a "responses to the Submitters" section. Another suggestion: an address exchange. - Leela Sinha, Northfield, MN

Dear Leela,

Of the many letters we have received, you are the second person in this issue to compliment us "guys" on Synapse. Although it is very flattering to receive so many positive responses - so flattering that we do the dance of joy around the office all day - it is important for us to point out that it is not always "guys" who are responsible for publishing Synapse. Synapse is, in fact, brought to you by the hard work of people of the male and female gender, and we've even got a flamingo that helps out from time to time! ☺

On a more serious note, we can understand your feelings of wanting to respond to certain articles which appear in Synapse. Over the years there have been times when people have wished to respond to something which was published, and quite often they have found ways to do so through the pages of Synapse. A response could be a part of any of those sections that you mentioned - a letter to the editor, a personal, an article, a poem, or whatever you feel comfortable with. As far as printing addresses of submitters with articles or setting up an address exchange, this idea is generally frowned upon by many, simply because if addresses get into the wrong hands the unfortunate result can be piles and piles of unwanted mail. - The Editors



Dear Editor,

We are currently updating our internal database on magazines distributed through North America. It would be appreciated if you could take a few moments and fill out the enclosed postage-paid postcard and return it to The Institute by November 15, 1993.

Thank you for your time. We look forward to your prompt reply. - Mark Queirolo, The Institute, INC.

Dear Mark,

Although we have responded to your postcard, we regret to inform you that your letter was the least exciting of all the letters we received. Perhaps in the future you should include a complimentary container of Ben & Jerry's ice cream. - The Editors

als..Personals..Personals..Personals..Pers

Love & kisses to all my peach-fuzz friends from WAFE-Con, Heather, Colleen, Anne, Emily, and Kelli-from-hell.

Peace, Joy & Boot Polish to you all.

Love, David Low

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

I want to say hi to James, Sean, and the other really big guys I played with; to Eric (Spike) and to all my friends at SUUSI '93. Y'all letter write me at 7721 Bradenton Dr., Charlotte, NC 28210 Jenny Burger (The girl who sprained her ankle)

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

To Saran Arnott - me too - sorta. It doesn't have to die! Contact me, we'll chat. To James Dean/anon: hugs...and if you ever want to talk (anon or otherwise) I'll listen. To Lorne: WELCOME! - Leela Shina, 17 Diamond Crest Lane, Stamford, CT 06903-4935

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

To everyone wonderful who has written me (personals or letters) Sorry - I'm just busy, not dead, please

forgive me...To all at or from UNIRONDAK who remember me: hugs, hula hops, and Shalom - I miss y'all terribly; to all former GAers and all UU miscellania that I have (or should have) known, let the web remain unbroken...

- Leela Shina c/o Carleton College 300 North College St. Northfield, MN 55057.

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

All you UU peoples... This is to anyone that can recognize my name -- Sara Stevenson -- or that doesn't you can still write!

Sara Stevenson
1537 S. Owasso
Tulsa, OK 74120
P.S. Just Write! I promise I'll write back!

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

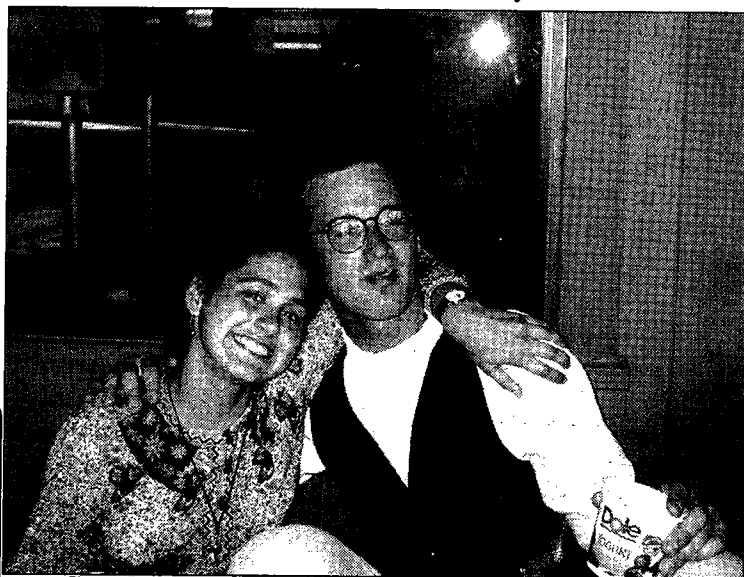
To all those that I called home but have since flown away - I may have never found the voice for the words or the words for the voice but know that I love you eternally. This Cheshire Cat is disappearing but the smile still remains... -Miranda.

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

Welcoming A New YPS!

Hey there, Synapse readers! My name is Dan Ross and as you may have deduced I will soon be living in Boston, working in the Youth Office, and doing what else, who knows. I have been living in Santa Cruz for three years now, going to the local community college and working as a waiter in a retirement home and as a receiving clerk in the school's warehouse. Although I really love living here I feel good about the move to Boston. School hasn't been as inspiring as I had hoped and that gives me more reason to enjoy a change of scenery. After the YRUU internship is up I have waiting for me a trip to Europe, touring by bicycle. My main concern recently has been preparing myself for the cold weather. Having lived in California for two thirds of my life, I have grown quite comfortable to wearing shorts in December and having dry, hot summers, so it's going to be quite a shock coming into a full blown east coast winter. Part of me still feels that I'm coming home, though.

Entering the Thanksgiving weekend my mind has slipped to those people who I've got to thank and how much they will be missed when I leave. I'd like to send thanks and a big hug to Richard Foote, Edith Parker, Bhima, Alison, and Vanessa for their kind letters. My current boss here in Santa Cruz has become a good friend and also deserves thanks for all his help and advice. I guess while I'm at it I might as well thank my mother and stepfather who have been very supportive of my decisions even though they don't hold the promise of a master's degree and a well-paying career in store for the future. I will miss my friends and family in California greatly but I feel confident that the people I will be working with, Jory, Lorne, and all those I've not met yet will be warm and interesting people. Like I've said before (actually, I don't think I've ever said this but I'll say it now), I've never met a Unitarian Universalist I couldn't bear.



Sarah Gibb and Dan Ross at Con-Con 1993

Dear Lisa,
How are U dooing? Hupe U are enhjoeing Detroit. Does Jasper enhjoy Detroit? Sorri I couldn't make it too your installashun. Remember: The blue goose flyes south at midnight unless the orange penguin tells it not to. See U L8er, -MUT

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

To the bisexual YRUU woman whose article appeared in Synapse Vol. XI, Issue 2 Sept/Oct World Supplement: Did you know there's a support group for bisexual UU's? It's called UU BiNetwork - UUBN, PO Box 10818 Portland, ME 04104 - send 'em a note if you want - it's fun to get a bi-oriented newsletter.

-Jeff of Familia Aleguia

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

Dear Katie, Miles, Evelyn, Mara, Don, Jessie, Shawn, Sarah, Eric, Devoe, Allison, Leela, Shakti, Christoph, Abby, Leonie, Meg(s), everybody else in youth

group or YAFY who's names I cannot remember, Dave, etc. (Rowe), and Marita + Kevin (I hope you get this), I love you. You make me happy. - Dawn Star

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

Earday Abray, Ankthay evyay orfay allhay ovyay avehay oneday erfay emay. Ovyay anehay evryay V.F.V. ebablypray avedsay ymay ifelay, ertainlycay ym anitysay. Ankthay evyay arfay eingbay erethay erfay emay, anohay erfay entinuincay otay ebay erethay erfay emay. Ouyay arehay ahay eatgray iendfray. Inhay actfay, obray ishay oubleday - usplay - ooogay.

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

Galen - You're hell-of funny! Becca - You're a beautiful gooess! Ethan - Praise be to goo! Robin - "Gloomp Gloomp!" went the little green frog... Dylan - Gwow! It sucks to be stuck on a desert island with an aardvark who sucks on xylophones! Chris - Nintendo at 4AM! Matt - Rapin' the frog, n' shit! Improv Workshop - Xylophone! Heather - I love all 49! Thx! Everyone at Con-Con '93 - **** you clown! **** You!

Love you always, Andrea L.

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

Gabriel / Alan - Are you still interested in that job? - Mitchell

☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹

You Too Can Send a Personal!

Just send us your message of 50 words or less, preferably typed, but we will take anything you give us. Send it to Synapse C/O The Youth Office, 25 Beacon St. Boston, MA 02108 USA. We reserve the right to edit any inappropriate material and impose a limit of 2 personals per person unless we have space for more.

Chair of Contents

Page 2 Letters! Page 8 Social Action Page.
Page 3 You're looking at it! Page 9 & 10 Creative Stuff
Page 5 That Continental Thing! Page 11 Con-Con!
Pages 6 & 7 The Center Spread! Page 12 The end?

Editorial Comments: The following article sparked off some friendly debate among the editors about whether the bits about stealing money and delaying the mail were meant as humor, or as a vicious plot to entice youth to illegal actions. We decided on the humor verdict, and so present this to you as a satire, with a very good message overall: Find meaning in what you do, and do what you find meaning in.

Work Ethic: A Forgotten Value?

-Kirk Martin

Work Ethic is generally defined as a set of values based on the virtues of hard work and diligence. To many of you out there, this concept may seem quite foreign; "Work? What's work?. The reason this concept may sound foreign is because, like the majority of people nowadays, you have rarely had work to do which you are proud of, or seems interesting to you. This is not your fault. Let's face it, the job market does not lend itself to picking and choosing until you find a job that fills you with pride, or even that interests you. But, there are alternatives to just accepting that your job will be boring, stupid, mundane, etc.

One alternative is to find a way to get something covert out of your job. Stop thinking of your job as work and start thinking of it as your entertainment. Throw away your television, radio, stereo, Game Boy, vibrator, etc., and realize how much fun work can be! Create something at your work that will give you some enjoyment. My advice is to steal as much money out of the cash register (if there is one) as you can get away with. Or see how much time you can spend insulting your superiors (if

they deserve it) just within earshot of your fellow employees. This will not only relieve great amounts of tension, but it will also endear you to many of your coworkers who may be too economically imprisoned to express their own frustrations.

Or, remind yourself that you are only at work for the meager scraps of wages that your overseer deems necessary for you to live on. If your job is oppressive, why play along and be a good employee? Realize how much fun it is to hide a document marked "CONFIDENTIAL" or kidnap a package marked "URGENT"; in my experience, they're almost never really urgent! Open your mind and be creative. During my stint as a clerk in a mail room, I was able to delay the entire outflow of mail by at least four or five days because I didn't feel that the mail was ready for its long journey ahead and needed more time to prepare. You can't imagine how many truly amazing things the oppressed worker's mind can come up with to completely ruin a multi-billion dollar conglomerate. And remember, IT IS NOT ILLEGAL (Editor's note: well... "legal" is a relative term...)! The worst thing they can do you is fire you, at which point you forget

you ever worked there, go down the street, fill out an application somewhere else and don't list that previous employer as a reference. And the process begins anew, fresh as a cool spring breeze.

Another alternative to the humdrum worker's existence, is to start doing something YOU want to do. Plant a garden, be a volunteer fire person (I hate PC), anything that has an end that YOU think is beneficial. Then really get into it. There is nothing more rewarding than being able to exhaust yourself, and then have something to show for your work. Become self sufficient, because if the goals of your employer are nowhere near the goals that you have in life, you'll never be satisfied working there. I am sure you have something that you would rather achieve in life besides earning \$5.50 per hour so that you can go home and relax. Forget that, forget kissing up to some domineering assistant manager who came straight out of some School For Power Trippers and is now superior because he sold himself out. You don't need that.

I understand that making ends meet is an extremely hard task to accomplish and there is a certain amount of desperation looming over most of our heads right now, but at least try to accomplish something that you deem as worthwhile. You are never going to be able to appreciate the true value of your work unless you receive something greater than a paycheck for it. **

"Every person has the potential to look back at their life and say something more than 'I was a good student and a good employee'."
-Natasha Phipps

"A dog can follow an abusive owner around for years, because that's the only way it knows to get food and shelter. Won't the owner be surprised when Spot gets fed up and runs off with the wild dogs in the hills? Don't be afraid to bite the hand that feeds you; if that same hand is the one that beats you!"
-J. F. Rhoads

"An employee being loyal to her employer is like a prisoner being loyal to the prison guard. Society chains us with a need for money, and forces us to work for 40 or 50 years of our life just for the 'privilege' of eating and sleeping indoors. I find that odd."
-Uma Mi

A Few Things to Consider About Capitalism...

-Sean Ramsey

* Capitalism is based on this idea that an employer can hire whoever s/he wants to and that a worker can apply to work and chose to work where ever s/he wants to. Hence the idea that this is a free-market economy. However, problems arise in the fact that the workers in a free-market economy are at a disadvantage by the mere fact that they are looking for a job. Obviously, there are more workers than there are jobs (unemployment). Therefore if unemployment is high and there are fewer jobs out there then there are workers there is a greater disadvantage to the workers. Take a look around you. There is high unemployment and as a consequence the unions are weaker and capitalists are gaining strength (NAFTA?). The opposite is also true however. When there are a lot of jobs and unemployment is low, workers gain strength and can demand more. Remember Hoffa? Remember what happened during and right after WWII?

* Let's talk about your boss. If you work at a retail chain or restaurant chain most likely your boss is just a manager. His/her job is to manage the store to a point where the store reaps a certain profit margin. The hiring of part-time workers, the reduction of waste, the efficiency and diligence of the workers, etc. all play a huge role in helping him/her net a certain profit... not for himself, but rather for the shareholders of the corporation who demand the particular profit margin. So getting back at your boss may only cause problems for you and your boss. Unfortunately, where you may only lose your CD money or are forced to look for another dead-end part-time job, your manager has probably lost a job for awhile which means no rent, no food, no diapers for the newborn, or no health plan! Think about to who you really want to send a message.

* What are some alternatives to capitalism? Most likely there may be some cooperatives in your town. Seek them out and find out how you can become an employee. Cooperatives (co-ops) are owned and managed by the employees themselves. In essence you are your own boss. The spirit of self-interest and individualism in spite of the group are thrown out of the window for the most part. What benefits the co-op will usually benefit yourself. If the co-op does well, then so does everyone in the group.

Another option is to search out non-profit organizations like UNICEF, Planned Parenthood, and even the UUA and try to get a job working in an environment that isn't necessarily spending all it's energies trying to reap the greatest profit but rather working for a more general good. This is a way of doing something in which you can, perhaps, believe.

* For more information on the conflict between employers and employees check out Capital Manifesto by Karl Marx, or look into some socialist newspapers like "The Militant." Remember, however that for everything you read about the political economy of the United States another argument can be made for and against it. Just look at NAFTA! In our current system that is becoming evermore complicated with the growth of a service economy, free-trade agreements, the European community, etc., our job as responsible citizens is to gather all the facts that will allow us to define our own individual sense of truth and justice, and act accordingly.

Sweaty Science Fiction

or

Discovering the Deodorant Deception

-Robin Torrey

Jeanne Tetweiler looked about forty. She was a tidy, handsome woman who usually met all the requirements of Standard Office Personal with ease. Today, however, she frowned into the image reflector as she passed her hands in front of the automatic sensor that brought water flowing to the sink. She had forgotten to block the sweat glands under her arms this morning, and there were obvious streaks of dampness along the seam of her imitation-cotton blouse. Even more embarrassing, she could almost... smell herself. A strong presence seemed to surround her saying *woman* for all to detect, and she felt obtuse and awkward interacting with all the daintily perfumed rose and lavender ladies she worked with. She couldn't wait 'til Society Work Hours were over and she could get home and jump into her own Hygiene Wash!

She didn't know what could have come over her this morning. Like all other Standard Office Personal, she had a thorough work prep. routine, and she always followed it rigorously. She had remembered all the other physical enhancements and inhibitors necessary for preparation in Society's work force; the vision-enhancers; breath disinfectant; height-amplifying shoes; energy tablets with breakfast; skin softener; hip and breast supports; face toner; ear, neck, wrist, and finger decorations; hair softening cream in the shower; everything but the under-arm sweat gland inhibitor! She had been self conscious and uncomfortable all day, and embarrassed to come within three feet of anyone. Oh well, it was 4:00 already, only a little longer.

An hour later she had left her cubicle and was in transit down the core of the building. She zipped up her thin synthetic jacket (thanks to the climate Improvements everywhere, she had no need for anything warmer), mercifully covering up her little hygiene oversight, and waited for the doors of the metallic vertical-transport box to open. They did, with a silent electronic glide, and she

stepped out into the vast marble entry hall on ground level. The enlongated heels on her height-enhancing shoes echoed as she crossed the lobby and made her way to the entrance of Mobile Unit Day Storage. She stepped on to an automatic stairway marked "DOWN" and stood checking her perfect, acrylic-enhanced nails as she was carried quickly down to Mobile Unit Day Storage. Jeanne worked several hundred feet above ground level, and her mobile unit was stored several hundred feet below, but because of Improved transit systems she never had to bother with climbing stairs.

Arriving down at Day Storage, she handed that morning's claim slip to the manager, and he soon had her unit brought around. She smiled politely and handed over the appropriate handful of credit notes before sliding into the glass-enclosed cockpit of the mobile unit. Before leaving the many concrete layers of Day Storage, she adjusted the climate-control in her unit and activated the Transit Entertainment system. By the time she pulled out of Day Storage and entered the city's complex network of traffic-ways, she was at the same 70 degree temperature that her office was kept at all year. She knew it was about 40 degrees outside, but only because the weather report on Transit Entertainment said so.

Twenty-eight minutes later Jeanne slowed the unit and entered the Mobile Unit Night Storage attached to her Residential Complex. She turned her unit's activation key over to an attendant there, and stepped into a vertical-transport box, which whisked her up to her residence level. As usual, she looked forward to removing all her physical Improvers, donning some soft, loose-fitting house clothes, and relaxing in comfort for the evening.

Ms. Tetweiler unlocked the door and groped inside for the portable Control Panel. Pressing buttons in one hand, and removing jacket and hat with the other, she turned on the lights and activated the Home Entertainment system. Keeping the Control Panel handy, she stopped off at the kitchen to remove a flat food dish from the Cold Storage Box and put it on the counter to radiate later. Then, finally, to the Hygiene Wash Room! Gratefully, she stripped off her work clothes and looked in the image reflector as she started water running in the sink. She had manual water

(continued on page 9)

The Continental

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621 Island Ford Rd. Inman, SC 29349 (803) 592-3135

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9308 26th St. SW Calgary, AL T2V 4G9 (403) 251-1452

* Denotes Steering Committee Member.

Youth Council Happened!

Youth Council took place this year at YMCA Camp Grady Spruce in Possum Kingdom Lake, TX from August 8 - 13. Although it was extremely hot the entire week, a lot of excellent work got done by the council. Among the many accomplishments, the most significant would be the change in the continental age range. This year Youth Council approved the criteria set by Youth Council 1989 to raise our lower age from 12 to 14, and so as of January 1, 1994 our age range officially becomes 14-20.



1993-1994 Youth Council

What follows is a list of the resolutions passed by the 1993 Youth Council. If you would like more information on what happened at Youth Council this year, please contact your district Youth Council Representative or the Youth Office.

- Implementing long range planning into YRUU
- Revising the Youth and Adult At-Large Structure on Youth Council
- YRUU joining the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights
- Restructuring the Social Action Network of Districts (SAND)
- Raising the lower age range of YRUU
- Sending a letter to the UUA Board of Trustees on Junior High Programming (See below)
- Resolution creating Junior Advisor Roles within YRUU
- The creation of a file for the YRUU School project
- Promoting the power of singing within us all!

An Open Letter to the U.U.A. Board of Trustees:

As of the 1993 Young Religious Unitarian Universalist Youth Council Meeting, Y.R.U.U. has divested itself of the junior high school aged U.U. youth (12 and 13 years old). This means that we are no longer obliged to include this group in our continental activities, including Youth Council and Continental Conference. We have made this change because we believe that the programming needs of junior high youth are special and distinct from those of youth between the ages of 14 and 20. We have found that few junior highers attend Y.R.U.U. continental events and most of those who do feel overwhelmed due to their different program needs. We believe that junior highers would draw greater benefits from having events of their own to introduce them to the larger world of Unitarian Universalism. It is also our belief that the previous broad mix of age groups has created confusion for adult leaders, discouraging their participation in Y.R.U.U., as well as preventing them from developing separate junior high programs.

In order that this change does not result in the neglect of junior high aged Unitarian Universalists, we are taking this opportunity to call for more aggressive action from the U.U.A. towards serving their needs. Typically, it is at the junior high age that young people drift away from the local congregations. Therefore, in order to assure that our own membership continues to grow and that entering youth are prepared to contribute positively to our Y.R.U.U. community, we strongly urge the U.U.A. to implement the following recommendations:

1. Because of the unique needs of this age group, we recommend the development of advisor training programs specific to the junior high age range.
2. Because we feel there is a significant difference between a family conference with a junior high program and a camp or conference devoted solely to junior highers, we recommend an increase in junior high summer camps, conferences, and rallies.
3. Because we fear that newly generated curriculum resources are being under used, we recommend greater promotion of these materials at General Assembly and at the district and local levels.
4. Because we recognize that many religious educators do not have the time and resources to devote to this demanding age group, we feel a priority must be set from the continental level to make sure that these problems are rectified.
5. Because more educational support is needed on programming for junior high age youth and junior high advisors, we recommend a renaissance module for junior high be developed for religious educators.

It is our hope that by removing the junior highers from Y.R.U.U., more focus will be brought to this critical age group from other sources within our denomination who are in a better position to develop appropriate programming for them.

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists Youth Council 1993

YRUU - What's Wrong With It?

By Fiona Thompson

YRUU - What's wrong with it? After two years of under enrolled con-cons and complaints from many districts of lack of commitment to conferences and YRUU in general, I think it's time we ask ourselves: "What are we doing wrong?" I've heard a few muttered complaints here and there, but rarely do I hear specific suggestions of how YRUU should change to suit the needs of those in it. Well, I've done some thinking and I've come up with a few reasons why YRUU may be losing its appeal and a few possible solutions.

Problems:

1) Controlling adults. Again and again I hear horror stories of advisors and religious educators taking power and control over local youth groups or districts. These "bad adults" not only give a bad name to the great advisors we do have, but are invasive and disempowering to young leaders. If we're in control of our own organization, then we'll make it interesting to ourselves.

(Continued on Page 10)

The ideas expressed here on our "Viewpoints" centerfold, are meant to make you happy, angry, active, concerned, empowered, thoughtful, etc. They are a part of the community, and represent just a few of the opinions in the broad and diverse constituency of YRUU. Please feel free to respond to anything you read.

Why I love YRUU... how it could be better

-Laura Peterson

The title of this was originally going to be "Why YRUU should succeed from the UUA". After starting college this year, and realizing how much more balanced I am than my peers, I would rather title it "Why I love YRUU". I am grateful that YRUU was and is a part of my life. I learned how to touch and love people in healthy ways, how to respect others with different life-styles and values, how to work with both youth and adults, how to play and dance and laugh, and most importantly, I discovered who I am. I think all Unitarian Universalists should be proud of what our youth movement has become and value the kind of people who are coming out of YRUU.

It has been my opinion for a few years that the youth movement is fundamentally different from the adult branch of the church. It cannot be denied that our worship styles, the nature of our participants, and our values differ greatly. The most basic difference though, and the one I credit with making YRUU so amazing, is in the organizational structures that manage the organizations. YRUU is, at least it is constantly striving to be, non-hierarchical by nature. It is founded on the principals of self-regulation and cooperation. YRUU has power from within, from the members of the organization. The UUA, districts, and most churches are hierarchical. There is a power structure in these that allows some people to be seen as "above" others in rank, importance, and even intelligence. The adult branch uses *power over* to run its bodies.

Hierarchy is not absent from YRUU. Although many of the different structures, such as the continental YRUU Steering Committee, are created without rank, there is still a ladder that YRUUers have to climb to get to these organizations. The order of the ladder, more or less, is: District YAC, Youth Council Representative, Steering Committee, Con Con Staff, and finally YRUU Programs Specialist. Despite this order, YRUU has values of cooperation and respect for other people that overcome this hybrid-hierarchy. YRUUers learn a distaste for hierarchy because it creates distrust and disrespect, both of which are contrary to the tenants of YRUU.

The adult segments of our denomination operate through their hierarchical structures. The ultimate service to the church is not to serve the spiritual needs of the community as the minister does, nor is it to be responsible for the coffee hour (which is undeniably a critical to the social life of any church). To serve one's church well it takes joining a committee and working your way towards the Board of Trustees. This is the high position seen as necessary in order to do good for your church.

As stated before, hierarchy by its nature breeds distrust and disrespect. It allows one person to be above another, and not only in rank. The implication of holding a position that is higher than someone else's is that the person on top is more intelligent, more committed to the church or the religion, and as is often the case with elections, more popular.

This structure allows for abuse from the above towards the below. Although our hierarchical government holds a system of checks and balances to avoid abuse, none of these safeguards exist in the church. Not only does a person in an above position automatically have an aura of greater worth than other members of the church, but that person is also able to abuse their power with other members simply because that is the way the church is set up.

The hierarchical structure of the adult part of the church is why YRUU should be autonomous from the UUA. While YRUU is constantly striving to create expectations and guidelines which are acceptable and heeded by most of its members, the power structure of the UUA allows a single person or a group of persons to rule over member bodies (like YRUU) and use power to influence or control them. A number of recent events are examples of how this abuse from above has ruined or at least stifled YRUU in three districts.

In one district, adults from one church in the district voiced opposition last year to the district's conference rules. The church, which gives money to the district, threatened the district YRUU and the district Board with cancelling its membership if the rules weren't tightened. A few youth from the church still attend conferences despite the objections of the church adults. The district youth body has now had to cut funding to all the branches because of the financial problems created by the church's absence. Another district youth program was overpowered when a youth came home from a youth conference with a hickey (which came from a game, not even a sexual encounter). YRUU was shut down, and couldn't get started again for for two years. The district YAC had no say in the decision, and had no power to contest the decision after it had been made. There was no chance for compromise, and no respect shown for the youth's ability to handle the issue.

In a third district, the YAC is facing pressure from one parent who decided about a year ago that there are not enough rules at conferences. This adult is the parent of a youth who was in an objectionable sexual situation at a church retreat, a retreat not related to YRUU. Nonetheless, the parent has become involved in the district RE Committee, and from this committee, has pressured the YAC to change conference rules to what adults on the RE Committee find acceptable. The YAC has been threatened with disavowment.

This abuse of YRUU is unacceptable. Although the UU church is committed to the use of the democratic system, there is no protection for the minority, in this case YRUU. YRUU has been condemned, shut down, and taken advantage of because of the hierarchy it is subjected to. Beyond the trials it has suffered, membership in the hierarchy of the UUA is contrary to the principals of YRUU. If we want to operate with the presence of trust and respect, YRUU cannot contribute to a structure that espouses the values of hierarchy in any way. YRUU is too important an organization to lose because of the abuse of a few powerful UUA adults. I love YRUU, and in order to preserve it, I think that YRUU needs to operate free from the governance of the UUA.

Editor's Note: We would like to make it clear that neither Synapse nor YRUU supports the use of drugs or other illegal substances at youth events. We do, however, realize that these issues are significant ones which concern many youth, and we support the dialogue needed to investigate them.

Is it Time to Re-Think? - What they don't teach in school...

By Dave Protti

For several years now I have studied the many issues surrounding the hemp plant and I feel now more than ever we need to seriously consider re-legalizing this poorly represented plant. Through personal study I have found hundreds of reasons to re-legalize this plant and some of the disturbingly ignorant reasons behind its initial prohibition. I would like to pass on all the information I have, as education is possibly the best tool against the current prohibition laws, however doing this would make for an article much too long for Synapse. So I will focus not around the plant's initial prohibition, but rather around some of the many uses of this plant. I encourage everyone to investigate for themselves the issues, and I have provided some sources for further reading.

First, a definition is in order to keep things clear. Hemp, cannabis hemp, cannabis sativa, Indian hemp, true hemp, muggles, pot, marijuana, reefer, grass, ganja, bhang, "the kind", dagga, and herb all refer to the same plant.

In the history of the world, hemp has continually played an extremely important role in society. In 1619, America's first hemp law was enacted at Jamestown Colony, Virginia, which "ordered" all farmers to "make tryal of" (grow) Indian hemp seed. More mandatory hemp cultivation laws were enacted in Massachusetts in 1631, in Connecticut in 1632 and in the Chesapeake Colonies into the 1700s. This situation was not limited to North America - in England full British citizenship of foreigners was often offered to those who would grow hemp, and fines levied against those who refused. Hemp was legal tender in much of the Americas from 1631 to the early 1800s - you could even pay your taxes with hemp in America for over 200 years. Wars have been fought over availability of hemp. Why has this plant been so important throughout history? Simply because hemp is, overall, the strongest, most-durable, longest-lasting natural soft fiber on the planet. Its leaves and flower tops (marijuana) were - depending on culture - one of the most used and important medicines for approximately two-thirds of the world's population for 3,000 years, up until the turn of this century.

Hemp has many technical uses. The stem of the plant, once dried, can be broken down into two parts: thread-like fibers and bits of "hurd" or pulp. The fiber strands can be spun into thread, which in turn can be made into high quality textiles and fabrics. Much of the world's fabrics (before 1937) were made from hemp as it produces a cloth that is softer, warmer, more water absorbent, and three times stronger than cotton. Many a ships' sail and clothing have been made from hemp. Hemp canvas has been called the "perfect archival medium", carrying paintings of Rembrandt, Van Gogh, Gainsborough, and others for hundreds of years. While approximately 50% of all chemicals used in US agriculture today are used in cotton growing, hemp

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Rainbows

-Jeff Melcher

Dreams do come true. I have been working on this one for over six years and I am really exited to see it progressing. When I saw the article in the last issue of Synapse about the possibility of a UU high school I jumped to the phone and called Serena at the youth office in Boston. The time had come to pull the resources together. (Synchronicity works well for me when combined with hard work and open-mindedness)

Last year I became the director of a GED+ program (GED, high school completion, work experience, and college transition) for youth 16-21 years old. This year I started to think about the ultimate school of my dreams, but I still had a ways

to go. With the amount of interest and pledged help I am finding in other people, I am ready to make the great leap. All the pieces are out there. We just need to guide them into place.

The Ultimate School. How do I know this is the ultimate school? Because I am designing it for ME. This is the school I would want to attend. I know I am not the only one dreaming of this. Every time I sponsor a group of youth at a conference, I've heard, "I hate my school, I need more of a challenge. I wish my school was more like a conference."

Next year I'll actually be working in a program that will serve about 30 students, a program that will include Tai Chi, Anatomy and Physiology, Massage, Spanish, Communications and Problem Solving, the "3 R's", Self Expression (dance, art,

music, juggling, etc.), and Life Skills including organic gardening, cooking, work experience and ecologies.

Don't follow your dream, Chase it!! Before it gets away. **

Editor's Note: Jeff Melcher is an adult in Oregon, and in addition to working on the educational facility he mentions above, he will be working for the formation of a YRUU school during the coming spring. He will be involved in hosting interested youth and adults one weekend a month for Brainstorm Sessions. See page 8 for more details about the YRUU school and how you can be involved.

and assertions sent in to us by various youth and adults in the YRUU community we will be glad to carry on the interchange of ideas here in *Synapse*!

row in many climates, and insect enemies. The fibers are one of the strongest and most durable twines.¹ Hemp fragments have many uses. Hemp can be made into tree-less, paper. In 1883, 75 - 90% of the paper was made with hemp fiber: books, clothing, stocks, bonds, newspapers, etc. After the Declaration of Independence on hemp paper. The US has recognized the importance of hemp as a crop. In a 1916 report from the US Department of Agriculture, the USDA stated that hemp was superior to tree papermaking. One of the most significant was that if hemp was used, over a 20 acre amount of pulp as 4.1 acres would use only 1/4 to 1/7 as much chemicals to break down the pulp, or even none at all. The bleaching process is done with a hydrogen peroxide solution, eliminating the pollution of rivers associated with using chlorine bleach. Hemp is the clear cutting of the world. One acre of hemp could produce as much paper as four acres of trees. Looking into the future of the world's foremost energy source, hemp has ten tons of biomass energy in four months (over four times the energy of the nearest biomass rival, the corn). It can be refined into charcoal for fuel, and using a process patented by the US, it can be turned into a synthetic gasoline.³ When the hemp is burned, there is no pollution. The components which make up the fuel are clean, when fuel derived from hemp is much cleaner than fossil fuels. It is as little as 6% of contiguous land area put into cultivation for hemp could be enough energy produced to meet the demands in the US for coal, oil, and gas (Ford motor company) even after 1937 when it was estimated that someday we would get automobiles from the soil". In 1970, the dream to the public - a car made from plastic panels, hemp, and spruce pulp (the only material on which the panels were

son these days for continued use) is mostly based around the fact that I am not an authority on hemp and is that these fears are, for the most part, unfounded. Medical uses for cannabis have died throughout history and have negative aspects. Those which have been used are the methods of "research". For centuries, hemp extracts have been used as real medicines for various ailments. From 1842 through the 1930s, hemp (known as cannabis) was widely prescribed in the United States, through childhood, and old age. There are 60 known varieties of cannabis smoke.⁷ I don't know the specifics, but I would like to stress

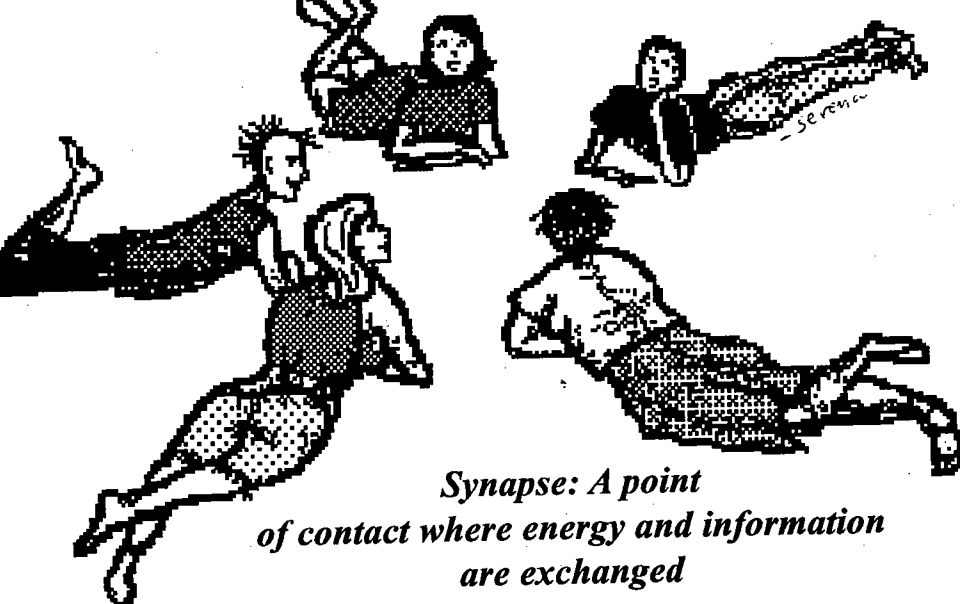
the point that hemp has shown many safe, positive uses, but it is nearly impossible for researchers to do further studies because of the many restrictions imposed by the federal government. Let's look at one of the studies showing "negative" results which is quite often used in drug literature produced by governments. In 1974 the results of the Dr. Heath/Tulane University study were produced showing that marijuana led to "permanent brain damage". What they did is force-fed marijuana to monkeys for a period of time and when the monkeys died they found lots of dead brain cells. Initially they refused to reveal the methods that were used in this study, and it took over six years of lawsuits (launched mostly by NORML) to get the entire details. What was found was shocking. What was basically done is the monkeys were strapped into a chair each day and pumped with the equivalent of 63 Colombian strength joints over a period of "five minutes, through gas masks", losing no smoke. The monkeys were suffocating. Three to five minutes of oxygen deprivation causes brain damage - "dead brain cells".⁸ The Heath/Tulane study really showed the results of asphyxiation and carbon monoxide poisoning. All researchers agree that the findings in Heath's experiment regarding marijuana are of no value because all the factors had not been considered in the initial report, however the government continues to use it as "scientific proof" in its literature.

I believe that it is time we re-think our laws. It is time to stop this repressive and pointless prohibition. With the many possible technical and medical uses hemp is one plant we can't live much longer without. I do not wish to promote the use of hemp to anyone - this is a choice which should be left up to each and every individual. But I do believe that this should be a choice, not a government decision. I encourage everyone to do some of their own research on the subject. Most of the information I have presented here can be found in a book by Jack Herer called *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*. If you are interested, it can be ordered through:

Help End Marijuana Prohibition
5632 Van Nuys Blvd. Suite 310
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Footnotes:

- ¹Herndon, G.M., *Hemp in Colonial Virginia*, 1963; Able, E., *Marijuana, the First 12,000 Years*, Plenum Press, 1980; *Popular Mechanics Magazine*, February 1938, "New Billion-Dollar Crop"; U.S. Agriculture Index, 1916-1982; Magoun, Alexander, *The Frigate Constitution*, 1928; USDA Film *Hemp For Victory*, 1942.
- ²U.S. Department of Agriculture Bulletin 404, *HEMP: A NEW PAPER-MAKING MATERIAL*, October 14, 1916; *Pulp and Paper Magazine*, June 1991.
- ³Osburn, Lynn, *Energy Farming In America: Hemp for Fuel*, BACH Publication, 1989; *Solar Gas*, 1980; *Omni*, 1983; Cornell University; *Science Digest*, 1983.
- ⁴*Popular Mechanics Magazine*, Vol. 76, No. 6, December 1941.
- ⁵Mikuriya, Tod, M.D., *Marijuana Medical Papers 1839-1972*, Medi-Comp Press, 1973; U.S. Pharmacopoeia prior to 1937.
- ⁶Cohen & Stillman, *Therapeutic Potential of Marijuana*, UCLA, 1976; *Jamaican Studies*, 1968-74, 1975; Carter, Edward W., *Cannabis in Costa Rica - A Study in Chronic Marijuana Use*, 1980-82; Tashkin, Dr. Donald, *UCLA Studies*, 1969-83; *UCLA Pulmonary Studies*, 1969-90.
- ⁷Red Cross Safety Manual. **



Synapse: A point of contact where energy and information are exchanged

Ed. note: Abuse and misuse of the trusting, affectionate atmosphere at conferences does occur. Awareness of this issue is the only way we can maintain the open, loving communities we try to create. We recommend that groups discuss boundary issues and sexual appropriateness at the beginning of each conference. Each district has a different stance on healthy sexuality at conferences, but all districts and groups should develop avenues to deal with harassment. If a situation of abuse does occur, we encourage YRUU groups to confront it openly and take steps to prevent it in the future. Although we recognize that profanity is offensive to some readers, we have chosen to keep it in where it is found in the following accounts of sexual harassment. We feel that it is important for women to express the anger and emotion that results from harassment and abuse.

da sexual harassment thang -name has been withheld on request

I am a YRUU woman and I was sexually harassed at a large summer youth conference. I was on the conference staff and frequently found myself preoccupied with questions or demands or crisis, all the while trying to be as amicable and polite as possible. That conference's staff guidelines had been created so that the staff members were not to engage in sexual or romantic relations of any kind. So, for the conference, I had put aside any thoughts of sex or relationships- so that I could put all my energies into the conference. With both of these circumstances guiding my role at the conference (that is, my desire to be approachable and my commitment to being a non-sexual being for the week), I was found off my guard when an incident of sexual harassment happened to me. I was walking through the cafeteria when I was approached by two male conferees, a youth and an adult, who asked me to take part in a "test" that the youth were conducting. Although I was en route to some task, and aware of the reputation for harassment that the male youth had already developed, I wanted to be an open, welcoming staff member so I agreed to take the test. Had I been in any setting other than a conference, I would have never accepted this type of offer. But because conferences are a place where trust is so important, I did not listen to my intuition as I would have anywhere else. The youth then asked me to close my eyes. At that point I objected, but he persuaded me that it was nothing bad, that "you'll like it... don't worry". When my eyes were closed, the young man took some ice from his cup, put it in his mouth, and with the ice and his tongue began to lick and probe and otherwise invade my left ear, face and neck. It didn't last very long, but as I was standing there feeling completely insulted and powerless (as harassment tends to do to people), it went on way too long. When I opened my eyes, the adult and youth were standing there, smiling. The youth then said, "Okay, so did your left leg tingle?" That was the test. I looked at him, said no, and left. The youth was told later (after many similar exploits with female conferees) that he could not return to the conference the next year, although he didn't admit that he understood why. This is one of my experiences with sexual harassment or sexual abuse at conferences. **

It Can't Happen Here? YRUU Sexual Harassers -Fiona Thomson

I think it's time for YRUUers to come out of denial about sexual harassment. When I was 15, an older, more experienced guy at a conference manipulated me into "making out" with him. Finally I told him I wouldn't have intercourse with him and he said that was okay, but after a few minutes he tried to take off my pants. I'm pretty confident and I was able to tell him to stop and, lucky for me, he did. Ironically, when, years later, I ran a women's issues workshop at a con, that same guy told a story about how he was being "falsely accused" of rape. At Con Con one year, one of the staff members told me he liked me and although at the time I was happy to mess around with him for the first half of the week, I later realized that it would have been hard for me to say so if I hadn't been interested. It was my second Con Con and I thought he was great. He was someone I looked up to and admired. These are two of my personal experiences but I've heard horror stories that were much worse. A lot of teenage boys think that because everyone is hugging and affectionate at conferences it's okay to touch women inappropriately. At least two male Con Con deans and lots of YPS's have used their power roles to get involved with people. This shit is intolerable. A lot of these stories never get heard for a few reasons. One is the same reason that most sexual harassment and rape stories never get told- fear. Or that feeling that it was your own fault. But another reason is that we don't want to lose what we do have in YRUU. The freedom to touch each other, and learn about affection and sexuality and love. People are afraid that if they tell their parents then their parents won't let them go back to cons. But even more than that the YRUU structure covers these stories up because they don't want to lose YRUU. At Con Con 1990 there were charges of sexual harassment, if not worse, brought against a male conferee. He was "talked to", although not kicked out, and it was never talked about again. I think someone should have stood up at lunch and said "this motherfucker is abusive!". But nothing happened. What are we afraid of? At the last two Con Cons there were guys who were extremely invasive towards women and although this last year the guy was talked to and asked not to come back next year, not much was done during the week to stop him. I don't want to discount the efforts the Con Con staff and Spirit Committee made to stop these guys, but rather the lack of a process to deal with them. We have to talk about this stuff instead of covering it up. If the churches or UUA or parents try to shut us down for being honest and trying to fight harassment, then they're missing the point. We get harassed *everywhere*, at school, at work, on the streets, with friends. Shutting down conferences is not going to get rid of harassment. Addressing the issue and not tolerating violence is. **

UU Youth Gather For Community and... Painting?

A Successful Service Program

-Steve Cook

This summer, for the first time in twenty years, the UU Service Committee sponsored a youth service program. Six Unitarian Universalist teens from Maryland, Connecticut, Oklahoma, and Texas, joined ten teens from Boston's Damien Funderburg Youth Program to remodel a room in First Parish Roxbury's historic church. These ten local teens came from Roxbury, an inner-city Boston neighborhood.

For the two weeks of the project, we out-of-towners stayed at the Brookline parish house, hosted by Dave and Julie Johnson, who made up one of the main forces behind the project. Shuttled into Roxbury daily, we spent the mornings working on the church, followed by lunch and amateur hustling at the pool table. The afternoons or evenings were usually taken up with a trip or activity with the Roxbury group.

Over the two weeks, we had the chance to do a surprisingly varied amount of activities, designed to help the sixteen of us bond. The first day that the out-of-town and Roxbury groups met, we were treated to a barbecue accompanied by folk and blues music. We also went swimming in a local lake, went "mallng" in Cambridge, visited the Edward Evered Hale House, viewed an exhibit at the National Museum of Afro-American

Art and a Malcom X-inspired art showing in downtown Boston, and met our sponsors at the UU Service Committee.

Under Dave Johnson's supervision, we made steady progress on the room in the Roxbury church. After getting the furniture removed, paint stripped, walls washed and cracks plastered, the painting went smoothly- in spite of a record heat wave in Boston and a broken fan! In exactly the time allotted, we had gotten everything done that we could get done. More important than the fix-up effort, though, was the interaction. With most of the six of us coming from white suburbs around the country, and the Roxbury group coming from the inner city, we all got the chance to learn more about each other's cultures. Working together helped us all to overcome stereotypes, and discover a group friendship.

While stripping down the room, we all found out how nice each person involved was. I made some (hopefully!) lasting friends with both the local and visiting teens. When Dave took part in a similar service project twenty years ago, it made a powerful impression on him- eventually leading him to suggest and participate in this year's project. I don't know if I'll ever be a part of the "third generation" of this project, but I know that this second generation created some lasting memories! **

For more information about future UU Service Committee projects, contact: Charlie Zoeller (617) 868-6600
UU Service Committee
130 Prospect Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

How do you get UU Youth from all over the continent to create a YRUU school? Let them Brainstorm!

Here's what we have so far:

- *Lots of enthusiastic youth and adults who are interested in forming an institute of alternative, UU based education for teens.
- *Support for the idea from the Youth Office at the UUA.
- *Some great people in Oregon who are ready to host people interested in working on the idea.

Here's what we need:

- *A comprehensive educational program that reflects YRUU's principals of equality, community, individual worth, Youth Empowerment, and mutual respect.
- *A system for supporting teachers and students
- *Funding
- *A site for the School

Here's what you can do to help figure out how to get what we need:

*Come to as many Monthly Brainstorm Sessions as you can! These will be held the last weekend of each month all spring and summer, in Roseburg, Oregon. These sessions will be times when any interested parties can come together and work on the creation of the school. All are welcome! This school can be what you want it to be, just give your input! A Brainstorm Session goes something like this:

Friday PM- arrive, introductions, designation of rotating facilitators, reports from last time, setting the weekend agenda, community building and relaxing

Saturday am- all group brainstorming session for new ideas, reading of mail-in contributions, designate afternoon working group topics

Saturday afternoon- break into working groups to do work on specific topics (i.e., group on finances, group on curriculum, group on housing, site, etc.)

Saturday evening- working groups share with the whole group, group discussion on issues

Sunday am- designate actions to be taken in the next month, assign tasks, review time-line if there is one, say good-bye 'till next month!

Brainstorm Sessions in Oregon will be for the creation of a pilot program there. Those dates again, are, January 28-30, February 25-27, March 25-27, April 22-24, May 27-29, June 24-26, July 22-24, and August 26-28. When you can come, RSVP to Jeff Melcher (503) 672-5895, or the Youth Office, (617) 742-2100, ext. 352.

*Write down your input and brainstorm ideas and send them to the Brainstorm Sessions, C/O Jeff Melcher P.O. Box 2404, Roseburg OR, 07470

*Volunteer to stay at the Oregon gathering place (in Roseburg) between monthly meetings to carry out the directives of the Brainstorm Sessions. Housing can be arranged for you. Contact Jeff or the Youth Office.

*Send your name and address to the Youth Office to be kept on a YRUU school mailing list

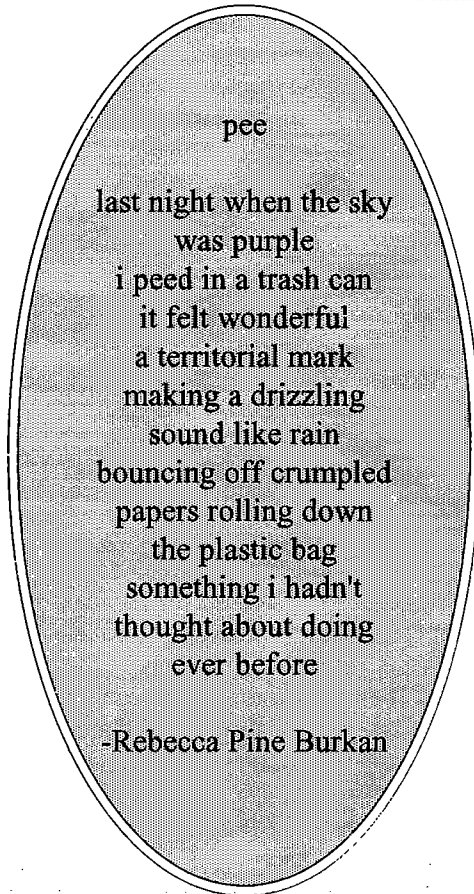
*Keep that energy and enthusiasm! It can happen!

Synapse Readers want to know... How Was Social Action Day?

As many of our readers know, December 3rd has been named YRUU's Annual Social Action Day. *Synapse* should be arriving just after this date, and we hope whatever project your group did was a big success!

The next step is to communicate with each other about successes and failures, suggestions and warnings. And what better way to do that, than through this fine publication in your hands, a paper dedicated to YRUU communication? That's right, *Synapse* would love to publish a list of all the projects that went on, and any comments about how they worked! Please send us stories, pictures, reports, comments, or even just the name of your project. **

Thank You, Thank You, etc. -the editors



My one goal in life is to have every choice I make be an accurate reflection of my beliefs, without regard to fear, society, or convenience.
-binka jones

Of course, this requires me to know what my beliefs are.
-binka jones

Most of our so-called reasoning consists of finding arguments to go on believing as we already do.

High Hopes for Con Con's Social Action Workshop

As you may have heard (see page 10), Continental Conference '94 will be the test run for a new era of programming. There are plans in the works to make all of the workshops at Con Con into more dynamic, vital, training grounds for learning and loving. But for all of us Change-The-World'ers out there, the most exiting of all is the Social Action Workshop.

Here's the picture so far: 15-30 (depending on the year and the project) youth sign up for the Social Action Weeklong Workshop on their registration forms, and are assigned to that workshop. They get to Con Con, they gather on the first morning, and miracle of miracles, they start working on a week long project! That's right, no more hours of discussing the socio-economic effects of war on malnourished prairie dogs! Every day the Social Action Workshop will be working on a project of concern in the local area of Con Con. Maybe we'll carpool to a local shelter and build a play ground for homeless kids, or help a local environmental group to clean up a refuge, or join some youth in the area to set up a Recreation Center... the possibilities are endless, and will be determined by where the site is each year, and what projects the workshop leaders can find.

Youth in the workshop will get the chance to experience working together to accomplish some positive affect on a community. Not only will these participants learn how to participate in such a project, but the leaders of the workshop will be sharing the step-by-step experience of finding a project, networking with local activists, figuring out logistics, and organizing the workshop members into a work force. So conferees will be able to go back to their districts with a bit of know-how and the enthusiasm to start some action in their youth own groups!

This amazing new workshop may prove beneficial to the entire conference as well. Every one at Con Con will have the knowledge that they are a part of a structure that is making a positive contribution to the areas it visits. Also, the Social Action workshop leaders will be asked to lead one super One-Shot Workshop some afternoon, when anyone at Con Con (not just the ones in the week long workshop) can participate in working on the project of the week. In this manner, the entire body of Con Con will be showing it's commitment to living our beliefs through work and action! **

On Women Who Wear Comfortable Shoes

-serena

I saw a bumper sticker that said "Lesbian Recruiter" and I thought, right on! 'Cause for a lot of women, lesbianism is a big step towards empowerment as a woman. If you like men more than women, you're always gonna have this nagging suspicion that everyone else likes men more than women too, and where does that leave you, as a woman? Sometimes it takes being interested in your own gender to show you that your gender is worth being interested in.

So to all you young ladies out there who are "questioning", or who have secret pencil sketches of naked women all over your math notes, or who are trying to forget that dream you had about your boyfriend's sister- Hang in there! I know your whole high school is telling you (and maybe you're even still telling yourself) that you need boys to survive, but don't worry; you don't. It's painful to admit, but the fact is that teenaged girls are often judged by the amount of male attention they can attract. I know it can be scary to contemplate giving up the one thing that is the measure of your worth as a young woman in this culture. Even if you don't like the game, it can make you panic to think about actually not playing.

But you're headed for greener pastures! The first step is to get over any fears or insecurities about what you're feeling, and start teaching yourself to say "lesbian" without pausing so long you've forgotten the first part of the sentence. Just because you're a UU (and gay) doesn't mean you don't have any homophobia! You've got to confront it honestly in order to get past your own stereotypes, and on to what lesbianism really is- women loving women, in all shapes and sizes and shades and simplicity. Then you're ready to curl up with Marge Piercy's *Small Changes*, or anything published by the Naiad Press, and wait for the right young woman to come along (if she hasn't already) and sweep you off your feet and show you what all the fuss is about.

As lesbians, we are women who have chosen to act on feelings that separate us from the world of mainstream U.S. culture. Just like any preference that doesn't lead directly to "Man, Woman, 2.5 Kids, and White Picket Fence", lesbianism means we're operating under a different set of rules than the ones society gives us. We are shown the Correct Life in movies and magazines, and when we decide that we have a better idea, there are consequences, both good and bad. But the biggest one I can see is that we have to re-evaluate. One *major* thing that we've been taught since childhood (heterosexuality) turned out to be wrong, so it follows that there may be other things as well. Lesbians everywhere have had to overcome years of brainwashing in order to simply live the life that is most natural and honest to us.

Here's to anyone out there struggling with the conflict between your cultural conditioning and what you know is right for you. Regardless of what your sexual orientation ends up being, may you find the courage to question yourself and your society, and figure out exactly how you want to be living, and who it is that you want to be sleeping with. Enjoy!**



MAKING LOVE for skid

near as bitter, unwashed necks
sweet as wispy smiles under tears
gentle sad kitty cat soft
cuddling you like a warm tongue
white knuckled fingers thrown around pink hips and throats
chunky fresh lips against silent skin
to be an old, old quilt around your quiet shoulders
to wipe your wet face with stunted thumbs
hush now my little girl
laughing again
laughing again
rolling over my mouth thick
smooth syrup like night
smiles tumbling as kids do in tall grass
wild pungent full
scarred cheeks round in the moonlight dust settling
worn denim sitting on worn wooden porches
eyes sparkling wine sunlight tomato
green
words rabbit bouncing jumping newborn kicking
planting deep gardens dark rich ancient
waiting for golden orange harvest
our time is now and i love you
more beautiful than the world

-kim rapelye

"You can't tell the boys from the girls
these days"

-Somebody's Grandma

"2-4-6-8, How do you know your
Operator's Straight?"

-marcher's in the Gay Rights March
in Washington, April '93

Sweaty Science Fiction or

Discovering the Deodorant Deception (Continued from Page 4)

at home, where she had to turn a knob to start the water flowing into the basin, but she was hoping to install a sensor soon to save her the effort. She began the process of Naturalizing, a ritual which was the reverse of the morning preparation to pass as Standard Office Personal, a ritual which was being acted out in private rooms all across the city as people came home from work.

First the small disks that clarified vision came out of her eyes and were set to soak overnight. Her face had been washed (which made it dry), disinfected (which made it tight), lotioned (which made it oily), and covered with toning Improvement (which made it just right) that morning. She cleaned off the toner, and with the toner went the eye and lip Improvements. Then off came the bra, which made her breasts look more like a twenty-year-old's, and the stockings, which made her legs look tanner and smoother, and controlled any ungraceful jiggling in her hips and thighs. She sighed. Jeanne Tetweiler now looked about fifty.

Before climbing into the Hygiene Wash, Jeanne made one small mistake. She lifted up one of her arms and, with a guilty glance at the image reflector, she bent her head and took a timid sniff. *So that's what I smell like.* She paused for a moment and breathed deeply. It was at about this time that a small and rusty part of Jeanne's consciousness stirred and whispered *there's nothing wrong with this smell.* But Ms. Jeanne Tetweiler was a well-adjusted member of Society, and years of training and conditioning

had gone into banishing thoughts like these. So she shook her head and quickly dropped her arm.

She activated the hot water Wash, and lathered up well with perfumed Body Cleanser. With a frown, she held up some foam to her face: MMM, SPRING TIME FRESHNESS! With a developing sense of urgency, she covered herself head to toe with the apple blossom soap, and then with a lavender scented bathing gel.

As she stepped from the Hygiene Wash and dried herself, Ms. Tetweiler checked the image reflector and saw a pale, slightly wrinkled face looking back at her. Her lip trembled as she found herself thinking *this is how my face is supposed to look.* She forgot that she never wore Improvements to bed. Defiantly, she rubbed on a layer of Smooth Skin, followed by a layer of Rosy Cheeks, some Thick Eyelashes, Dark Brows, and Wet Lips. THIS IS WHAT I LOOK LIKE! Jeanne forgot her comfortable house clothes laid out on the bed. She fumbled for her stockings instead and forced them desperately over still-wet toes and thighs. She glared stubbornly at the sleek tan limbs in the image reflector: THESE ARE MY LEGS! She said it aloud, as if to convince the weak but determined voice in her head; *my legs are pale and have hair growing out of them.* Ms. Tetweiler's Improved nails clicked sharply against the floor as she bent to retrieve her Elastic Bust Enhancement, which she strapped around her breasts. She stood with her

jaws clenched, staring at the body in the image reflector, before slipping on her height-enhancements and stalking out of the Hygiene Wash Room.

Jeanne Tetweiler sits in front of Home Entertainment, dressed only in shoes, stockings, bra, and make-up. On her lap is a plastic dish which contains her Food Substitute, divided into separate flavors and textures, which she has radiated for 80 seconds before eating. She pokes at it absently with a fork, held between fingers with curiously chipped nails. Her left hand rubs unconsciously at a newly-made tear in the "skin" of her smooth brown thigh. A stifled thought is picking its way through her brain, *I've chosen to accept a life of masks and hiding.*

Jeanne's Improved body and face are an earnest imitation of the three young actresses on the screen she stares at. The difference is in her expressionless eyes, stonily shut lips, and the steadily growing streak of black crawling down her cheek. Jeanne is paying extra close attention to the antics of her friends on the screen tonight, because she is resolutely trying to ignore the fact that she is crying. If you sat very close to Ms. Tetweiler, you would be able to detect that in addition to the run in her stockings, the chips in her nails, and the smudge of her make-up, she has again forgotten to block the effects of the sweat glands under her arms.

The year is 1993; it is, of course, about 70 degrees in the Residential Complex. **

Author's note: There's nothing wrong with using cosmetics, but many women are forced to use them in order to survive in this business/romantic/social world. Cosmetics should be purposeful, fun, and by choice only!

(What's Wrong With YRUU - Continued from Page 5)

- 2) YRUU may be getting too big. Most teenagers (at least myself) don't have time to commit themselves to their local YAC or work on planning huge conferences, or get much involved in continental YRUU.
- 3) YRUU's focus isn't interesting to most people. Some people say we're getting more conservative, some people are bored of the same tired songs and worships. Obviously, if YRUU is loosing membership, then something has changed in what we are doing, but with our rapid turnover, we don't have the benefit of a "his/herstorical" perspective to tell us what we're doing differently, whatever the reason. YRUU is no longer the priority that it used to be for many people.

Solutions:

- 1) Put power back in the hands of youth! In many districts, adults do a lot of planning (or cooking, or whatever) for conferences. In many districts, there is an adult "co-chair" of the YAC (or council or whatever). Is this necessary? Can't we make our own decisions? Why not rewrite your bylaws to say that the YAC is totally run by youth? Why not do our own planning (or cooking, or whatever)? If this becomes a trend, it might lead to some real reform, like the Youth Council or Steering Committee of YRUU to choose what member of the UUA Board of Trustees sits in and votes in it's meetings. Or having our steering committee choose who becomes Youth Programs Director (the adult in the youth office). Or giving youth editorial control of their own paper - "Synapse" (bet you didn't know that the UUA has final say on what goes in here, did you?) Of course, these last three changes must be made by the UUA, but if we demonstrate that we *can* run our organization, then maybe the UUA will see fit to *let* us do just that. (Or maybe not, but I digress...)
- 2) Downsize YRUU (Wow, I used one of those cool Bill Clinton non-words!). I spent much of the last two Youth Councils asking myself "Is this *doing* anything?" At huge conferences, I never have a feeling of community, in fact, I usually feel out of place. How can you make a community in one weekend (or one week) with 100 - 200 people? If conferences were smaller, and there were less bureaucratic "business" meetings, we'd have more time to make programming more fun.
- 3) I'm afraid I don't have much to suggest about how to make YRUU more interesting except this: I think when we design programming for ourselves we don't ask ourselves "will I have fun doing this?" If we trust our creative urges, instead of doing "the normal" routines at conferences, worships, and in youth groups, then those programs will stay fun and interesting. Jesus, who wants to sing "Dear Friends" again? Not me! Don't keep old traditions out of nostalgia, let them die their natural deaths and then find something more fun to do. Isn't that what we do this for, to have fun?

Miscellaneous Ramblings

By Lorne Tyndale, Boston, MA

The day seemed long, thought the man in the suede jacket. "And what a nice suede jacket this is", he thought. "I think I'll have it framed and hung on a piano", he said to himself as a small jubilant boy ran by.

"My - what a nice suede jacket you are wearing on this seemingly long day", said the small jubilant boy, "would you be interested in possibly buying a lama? I have a couple for sale today on this day which seems so very long."

"I would in fact be interested in buying a lama", said the man in the suede jacket, "but only if you are prepared to share some cake with me - I have some excellent cake!"

And so the two new found friends ate cake together and talked about many things, as if they had known each other for years. As they talked and ate cake, the meter continued to click away on Bob's taxi. Bob, unaware of this fact, continued to watch the two eat cake and admire the man's suede jacket and the boy's lama.

All of the sudden out of nowhere stepped a little girl. She couldn't have been more than 8 years old, but she seemed to have the personality of someone who was 45. She started reciting poetry to all six of them, but the poetry she recited was in Gaelic and nobody understood a word, but they all had a great time eating the cake anyways. "I once knew a song in Gaelic", said the boy with the lama, "it was a song about climbing a mountain on an exceptionally long day - a day similar to this seemingly long one." The boy then went on, eating cake, with no one apparently noticing, or really caring, about this fact.

"Perhaps I could buy that lama now", said the man in the suede jacket to the small boy with the lama, "before Bob's taxi drives off and leaves a large amount of smoke in the air. Is four dollars enough to buy such a fine lama?"

"Four dollars? For that amount I'll not only give you the lama, but I'll also throw in this goby-fish for free!", said the boy who was admiring the suede jacket and the seemingly long day. "Perhaps it will rain or snow."

And so the man in the suede jacket gave four dollars to the boy and walked away happily knowing that he had bought a lama on this seemingly long day, and the boy stood there with lots of cake, a lama, and a goby-fish to deal with.

Fear

By Dawn Shuman, Philadelphia, PA

I am afraid. I walk down the steps in a church which seems empty, but isn't really. There is a group of people upstairs who I trust as much as almost anyone and whom I would rely upon if anything really did happen. But I am afraid of things that sometimes happen to young women alone in dark empty places, at any time, so I walk on with fear pulled about me like a cloak.

Maybe I walk on *because* of my fear. If I wasn't afraid, maybe I would never really try hard enough to do anything. Maybe everything we do is like that.

Fear can be both a positive and a negative force: I had never thought of that before. If we were not prodded by fear, would we ever need to protect anything, make anything, work for anything? I have always assumed that fear was something to be overcome, out-thought, overpowered, outrun or out waited. Maybe those are not all the same things. That might be what causes the confusion over whether or not fear is to be equated with evil.

If you try to overcome fear, out-think your fear, overpower fear or most especially outrun fear, you will accomplish nothing. You will have simply run from one fear to the next, and eventually you will grow a chain of old fears, old reasons for running, escaping, negating, that you will never get rid of. It might be that these kinds of fears are what make people hate each other. I don't want to be afraid enough to hate somebody. I understand that we all have a need for limits on our horizons sometimes, but the kind of limits that so many people have are dangerous. I also do not want to live in a world where people are afraid of me enough to hate me, just because I am different than they are. Many people pretend (to themselves? to others) that they accept diversity. That they are tolerant. That they are good people. We are do good at building our cages for ourselves that we don't even notice what we are doing until we are in a prison of building blocks made out of our inability to accept things as they are.

The other way of dealing with fear, out waiting it, is what I think may be the good kind of fear. If you gather your fear about you, acknowledging it, taking it with you when you go out to do what needs doing, it will eventually melt away on its own. It will be gone.

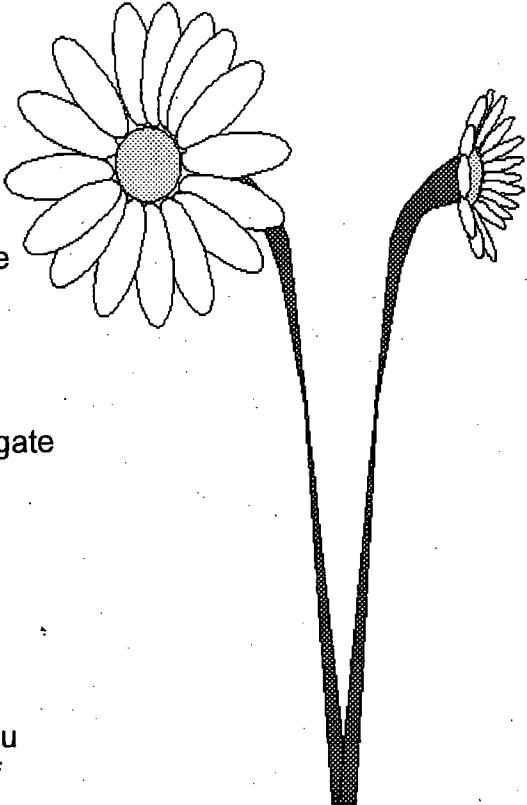
It will be gone because you have done something to balance it, not because you have ignored it or tried to destroy it. Even destroying the cause of your fear will not get rid of the fear itself. Acknowledging fear means being critical of yourself - not putting yourself down. That is what too many people do, and it just leads up to being more and more afraid. I mean thinking critically about things, evaluating things, taking fear into account as something that may be clouding your reality.

So, I think, this is what is meant be "the only thing to fear is fear itself." Not that being afraid is evil. What we have to truly fear is that it will cloud our vision of the world with unpleasant unrealities. What we believe is true has a tendency to become true. That doesn't mean that if I believe there is a rapist hiding in the coat closet, there is one. But if I believe that the world is a place where rapists hide in coat closets because I am too powerless to do anything about it, then I will probably be too powerless to do anything at all.

I don't think any fear can hurt you if you do something *with* it rather than *against* it. If we use our fears and do not let them use us they and we will stay fluid, flexible, changing. If we let them become rigid, they will grow into glass walls that separate us until they shatter, and we all cut our hands trying to pick up the pieces.

and if i push you away
By Rebecca Pine Burkan

and if i push you away
let me be alone
let me think feel grow
let me sense awaken experience
unquestioning
and if i push you away
let me have my time
let me taste touch smell
let me strengthen lengthen elongate
on my own
and if i push you away
let me forget
let me be free open calm
let me fly far and high
not looking back
and if i push you away
it doesn't mean i do not need you
it only means i also need myself



Rebirth of a World

I had planned to write before returning to school. Then again, I had many grand plans for the summer. In humbleness, I submit this recollection...

She was going to conquer the world. Instead, she did something even more empowering - she conquered her ghosts. A friend said to her one day that going into the water of her soul was like a rebirthing experience.

So there she stood at the edge of the ocean of herself from which she had previously ran, cowered from and feared. Almost killed herself in younger days because she didn't want to face what was there, who was there. In all the games she played with herself, she was turning into what she abhorred, what she mistrusted. At this point, she had nothing to loose. She had already lost herself. She no longer lived a life but instead followed one around.

She had always been her worst threat. And the waters seemed to loom. They could have swallowed her whole being if she let them. She knew what she had to do in order to take back her life from the draining force. She plunged into the waters in which she previously drowned. As she was washed up on the beach from the tumultuous movement, she discovered something beautiful - herself.

Always her own harshest critic, she finally found someone worthy of love - her own starving self. She was reborn from what dragged her down. A glorious rebirth of a world within her spirit.



The '93 Con Con staff, cuddling up in some sparse Texas shade.
Top row: Mosch, Lorne, Cay, Vanessa, and Jory.
Middle row: Sarah, Laura, Jen, Serena, and Tanya.
Bottom row: Shell, Caleb, Frank, John, Dan, and Edie.

What's happening to Con Con?

The 1993 Con Con theme was "the end of the beginning". After ten years of forming and improving our movement, last summer YRUU recognized the fact that the time has come to use our strength and energy in ways other than just forming and maintaining ourselves. Hence the theme, articulating what may become YRUU's transition to a more vital, active movement. A movement of youth committed to the search for truth and the necessity of change. In the spirit of this focus on re-evaluation, the '93 Youth Council directed the YRUU Steering Committee to evaluate Con Con, to come up with some ways for the energy of Con Con to be used to affect the world around us. In essence, Steering Committee was given the task of figuring out how all those great people coming to Con Con could be empowered to Walk their Talk!

So what's the big change in Con Con? Better workshops! As in the past, conferees will participate in a workshop that meet every morning of the week. The difference is, these workshops will provide experience and resources in five areas specific to YRUU programming. So at the end of the week, over a hundred youth will be leaving the conference with not only a lot of fond memories and new friends, but valuable expertise in areas of import to UU youth.

Here's the five workshops, and some projected comments about what will happen in them. These same morning workshops will be offered every year, and Con Con junkies can attend one after the other, participating in a new aspect of YRUU every time! As in previous years, the afternoon workshops will remain open for conferee-led recreation, discussion, etc.

Social Action- "We actually worked every day on a Social Action project in the local community where Con Con was held! And the leaders gave us helpful information about organizing youth and finding good projects."

Community Development- "We got really close through playing and talking, and then we learned how to lead those same community-forming games and discussions. We watched the community at Con Con, and worked on ways to keep it healthy."

Worship- "We shared a lot of hints and skills for leading worship, and we worked on evening workshops and made up a couple pages of readings and songs to take back to our districts."

Leadership Development- "We learned how to facilitate meetings, how to deal with conflict resolution, and how to motivate and empower our peers. We got to practice facilitating small groups within the workshop."

Theme- "We focused on this year's Con Con theme; how it relates to us and our youth movement. We worked at incorporating the theme into the conference."

We hope that improving the quality and focus of Con Con workshops will give the conference a renewed sense of purpose and vitality. Con Con goers will be registering for these workshops along with the initial Con Con registration, so keep an eye out for those Con Con Registration Forms in the spring! -The Editors

Hold Your Knees

I sit all alone
Thinking of what I have left behind
Holding my knees tight to my chest,
I begin to cry.

I cry for all the days-
Hours of laughter, games and friends.
I cry for the love that was generated,
But that has somehow left me behind.

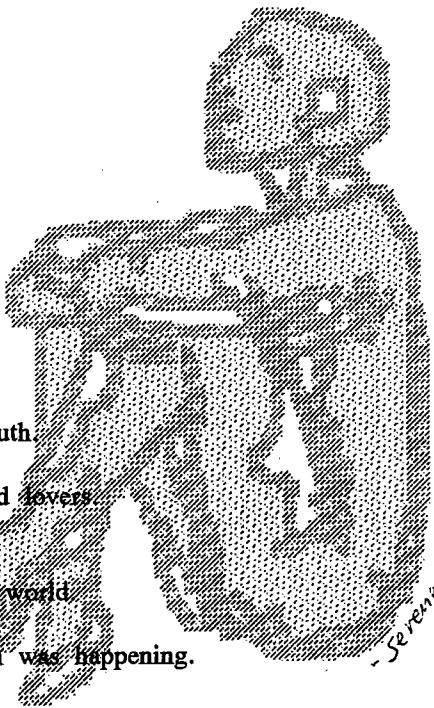
I cry for the bad food
Put together by the working hands of youth.
I cry for the unity
Of a temporary community of friends and lovers.

I cry for my heart
That breaks with every step into the real world.
I cry for the sleeping
That hardly took place because too much was happening.

I cry for the times that have left me
With a rude departure, thinking I shall never recover.
I cry for all of this.
I cry for a conference.

While holding myself I begin to think of it-
The days, friends, games, unity, bad food, love, my heart and the fun-
And somehow, amidst all of the crying
I smile.

-Sarah Arnott



Coming Soon: 1994 Continental Conference,
Our Generation, Our Selves
August 1-7 at Camp Emery, Michigan

Continental Conference Staff Descriptions

As of Steering Committee, fall 1993

If you're interested in being on staff for Con Con in August of '94, please look over these staff positions and write a letter of interest to the YRUU Steering Committee, C/O the Youth Office, by January 15th, 1994. Thanks!

The Following Staff Members...

Have their registration paid for, and share the responsibilities of **facilitating staff meetings, leading spirit circle in the mornings, planning and running Special Events in the evenings, and making announcements** to the Con Con community. Staff members will arrive a night early to Con Con for detail planning, and participate in daily staff meetings during Con Con.

Theme Weaving Coordinator (1994's theme is "Our Generation, Our Selves")

This is a **youth position**, whose responsibilities are related to incorporating the year's theme into the conference structure, and doing pre-conference **Special Events work**. Before Con Con this person will be **calling each staff member regularly** to check in with them on the pre-planning- to insure that the theme will be represented in each staffer's role. Also, this person will be **planning a weeklong workshop** with a self-selected co-leader on whatever the theme of the year is. At Con Con, the theme weaver will **co-lead the theme workshop**, and will be a **resource for other staff members** in keeping Con Con focused. This person will also **offer a one-shot workshop** in the afternoon on the theme. This person is selected from among the Steering Committee Members.

Social Action Coordinator

This is a **youth position**, whose main focus is to coordinate the week long social action workshop and project. Before Con Con, the Social Action Coordinator will self-select a co-leader for the social action weeklong workshop. The social action weeklong workshop will involve a project in the local area of Con Con, and the **coordination of the weeklong action project, both before and during Con Con**, is up to the Social Action Coordinator (along with the co-leader). This person should also bring a social action voice to the staff. This person will also **offer a one-shot workshop** in the afternoon on Social Action.

Leadership Coordinator

This is a **youth position**. Before Con Con, this person will **plan a workshop on leadership development** with a self-selected co-leader. The workshop should include training on facilitation, youth/adult interactions, motivating groups, conflict resolution, etc. (there are lots of leadership development resources available from the youth office to supplement this workshop if needed). During Con Con, this person will **co-lead the leadership development weeklong workshop**, and **serve on the energy committee** if needed. This person will also **offer a one-shot workshop** in the afternoon on Leadership development.

Worship Coordinator

This is a **youth position**, who will **plan and lead a weeklong workshop on youth worship** with a self-selected co-leader, and **coordinate the evening workshops**. This person will also **offer a one-shot workshop** in the afternoon on worship planning.

Gopher

This is a position for a **youth or adult from the local area**. The gopher will be **making runs to the nearest town each day** for supplies, medical needs, snacks to sell, etc. This person should have a car, or should be able to be signed on to a rental car.

Energy Coordinator

This is **position for a youth**, who would have a focus on the community of Con Con. The Energy chair would **co-lead a weeklong workshop on community building** with a self-selected co-leader, and would **facilitate the spirit committee meetings**, as well as **serving on the energy committee** as needed. This person will also **offer a one-shot workshop** in the afternoon on Community Building.

Con Artist

This is a **youth position**. The Con Artist's focus is communication. The Con Artist should have feelers out to most aspects of the conference, and will be charged with **answering questions and assisting conferees to solve problems** that come up during the week. This person is selected from among the Steering Committee Members.

Chaplain

This is an **adult position**, whose job is to be a spiritual resource for conferees. This person does not need to be an ordained minister, but should have an understanding of youth's spiritual needs. The Chaplain generally **offers an early morning vespers, dream sharing, or quiet discussion time**. The Chaplain should also be **available to council/listen to youth** in need of a friendly ear during the week. The chaplain may also be called upon as a resource for the Worship Person.

Logistics Coordinator

This is an **adult position** who should be **from the local area**. This person will be charged with **coordinating transportation between the airport and the site, arranging any home hospitality** needed before or after Con Con, and **setting up a bank account** in the local area for registration moneys and payment for the site.

Coordinator of Adults

This is an **adult position**. This person will keep the adults at Con Con healthy, happy, and well-adjusted. This person should have a **clear understanding of youth-led programming**, and should be able to communicate to adults their roles as **advisors, not leaders**. The Coordinator of Adults will **facilitate daily adult meetings**, and will **take adult concerns to the staff of Con Con**.

Mugbook Editor

This **youth** will edit and produce the Mugbook- taking mug shots, gathering personals, taking candid photos, etc.

Lifeguard

One youth will **lifeguard, depending on the availability of water at the site!**

A Few Final Words...

Volunteers For Peace

The 1993 International Workcamp Directory lists over 800 opportunities for creative travel throughout Western and Eastern Europe, Russia, North and West Africa, Asia, and The Americas. Workcamps are inexpensive ways that Americans of all ages can promote international goodwill through community service projects in 40 countries. 2-3 week programs are \$125. Please call or write for the 1993 Directory (\$10 first-class post-paid - Visa and MasterCard accepted) or for a FREE copy of our newsletter:

VFP International
Workcamps
PO Box 202
Belmont, Vermont
05730
(802) 259-2759



Some of the many who have enjoyed Youth Caucus at General Assembly

Calling All Former YRUUers!

Have you grown out of your youth group? Looking for something else to keep you going in UU circles? Why not find out what's up with the continental UU Young Adult Network (UU-YAN)! If you'd like information, you might want to get in touch with the continental UU-YAN contact:

Mark Gutttag
125 Forest St.
Winchester, MA 01980
(617) 721-4725

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 September 1, 1994 and ending August 31, 1995. The stipend is \$19,500 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 February 15, 1994 to be considered. Call the Youth Office at (617) 742-2100 if this deadline is an impossibility.

ARE YOU 18-25 YEARS OLD?

TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO AFTER YRUU?

Well, for starters, why not send your name, address(es) - home address, school address, e-mail address, phone number or anything else you can think of, and your birthdate (very important!) to the CONTINENTAL 18-25 YEAR OLD UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NETWORK! For the past year, I've been taking a "census" of 18-25 year old UUs. So far, I've got about 400 names, and the list is growing. Contact me and I'll send you a copy of *Spring Chickens*, the 18-25 year old UU newsletter (just don't ask me about the title!) and I'll try to let you know what's going on continentally and in your area for folks just out of high school. Get your friends' names and addresses to me, too! The more the merrier!

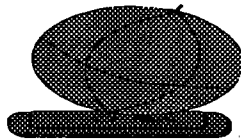
Kevin McCulloch
18-25 Coordinator Extraordinaire
Haverford College
Haverford, PA 19041
USA

email: pmccullo@acc.haverford.edu

Bright Blessings from Durango, CO (MDD). I take my pen in hand to speak to you of an idea hit upon by some of us at Con-Con '93. The idea was of a pagan group for youth that would organize events for district and continental YRUU / Post-high / CUUPS events... There would be one district, and one National event each year (including a business meeting). The group, to be called GC (or Gaia's Children), would be limited to this one event of its own because of its intent to be an enrichment group.

Why, you ask, do I write you? Because I heed help!!! (yours, not professional) I am in the process of writing national and district proposals and need people interested in working in my district and in other districts to help with the project. So, if you are interested, or would just like some extra information, please write me:

Andrew Drobny
Anasazi Apt, FLC
Durango, CO 81301



Youth Caucus at General Assembly 1994

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 1994: This year, General Assembly will be held in Fort Worth, Texas, June 23 - 28, 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 20.

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 20 to share in the spirit of General Assembly with other youth. However, if youth chose 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 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.

Announcing a Continental Leadership Development Conference!

The Youth Office is pleased to announce a continental leadership development conference to take place in the Fall of 1994. The conference will train 10 youth and 10 adults from across North America in the intricacies of youth leadership development who will then be available to facilitate leadership development conferences all over the continent. If you think you'd be interested in attending such a conference, or you'd just like more information, contact your district's Youth Council Representative or the Youth Office - 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108 (617) 742-2100 - for more information.

After reading Synapse, I'll bet you want to be an

At-Large Representative at Youth Council 1994!

The YRUU Youth Council is the governing body of YRUU, and meets once a year to make policy decisions, pass resolutions, worship, and decide the direction for the UU youth movement for the upcoming years. There are three At-Large positions for youth (Social Action Coordinator, General Assembly Liaison/Youth Caucus Business Manager, Transitional Age Range Representative, this year to represent the transition from Junior High to YRUU, ages 14 - 15), and there are seven positions for adults (25+), three of which are task-specific (Representative of UUA Ministry/Youth Council Chaplain, Advisor Coordinator, Religious Education Representative). The youth at-large positions are one year commitments with an option to re-apply for a second term at the end of the year, and the adult at-large term is two years. This year there are four adult at-large positions open. This year's meeting is in August and will be in the central area of the United States. All travel and expenses for At-Large members are paid for by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Applications should be type-written and should include:

Vital Information: Name, address, phone number, date of birth, and a list of the people from which you are expecting a recommendation.

A letter of intent: Why you want to be on Youth Council, the position for which you are applying, what you feel you can offer that position, what you think you can offer the group, any experience you have to bring to the group, what YRUU issues concern you, and what your dreams and visions for YRUU are.

Two letters of recommendation: These can be from Ministers, YRUU Youth PE Directors, YRUU Advisors, Teachers, or other with whom you have worked (at least one from a youth and one from an adult).

Address your applications to the YRUU Steering Committee, c/o the Youth Office, 25 Beacon St. Boston, MA 02108. **All applications are due by February 15, 1994.**

Unitarian Universalist National Conference for Social Justice

From March 12 - 15, 1993 in Washington, DC there will be a national social justice conference. If you are interested, please call Rod Thompson at (301) 937-3666 for more information.

UU Youths Get Grants

Are you part of a UU youth group doing exciting work in your community or church? Would a grant help you do your work better or with a wider reach? If yes, think about applying for funds from the UU Funding Program. The UU Funding Program makes grants of up to \$20,000 to projects that strengthen and enrich the denomination or that involve UU's in the issues and the needs of their communities. Some of the projects we've funded include the ABC Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Youth, the Brookline-Roxbury Youth Service Project, the Youth Conference on Disarmament at the United Nations, and many more... Call Katherine Kelly or Dream Nefra at (617) 357-4036 Mondays and Tuesdays for guidelines and application forms, or write to: UU Funding Program, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108.