



LREDA Newsletter

Quickening The Spirit

Reflections from our LREDA President, Susan Archer

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I write this having just returned from our midwinter LREDA board meeting. We were very fortunate to meet at the home of Ginger Luke which saved us very much money and allowed us to work uninterrupted in an environment that maximizes creative and productive discussion, planning and decisions. As always it is a privilege to work with such a resourceful and committed lot! Please do read the précis of the minutes from this meeting to get a sense of the many other issues we worked on!

As you know from an email sent to you in January, part of our work during this fall and winter has been dealing with the concerns about the security check points at the convention center in Ft. Lauderdale. I expect you have all read the email from the Board about our decision to go ahead with our LREDA events. (You can also see it and more on the LREDA website, under GA.) One result of all the conversations is that we have decided to focus our LREDA GA workshop on issues of class, one of the many strands of concern in this complex fabric of issues. It is also one about which many of you in the past two years have expressed a need. We think it will be an excellent workshop and I invite you to read more about it and the many other activities and opportunities at our Fort Lauderdale meetings in the flyer in the

LREDA Packet.

In another recent all-LREDA email, it was our task to tell you that our beloved Administrator, Shannon Hawkins, will be leaving in late spring. Shannon's decision to do this was based on an assessment of her needs at this time in her life. It was not an easy one for her to make and the Board is saddened by this loss. She is our very first staff Administrator and has served us for five years. What a difference she has made in this organization! Her work has helped to keep us on track in our daily operations and has supported each Board member's portfolio, as well as our committee and individual member needs. She has been a terrific engine behind our major events. She has taken care in our packets, through email, by phone, and on our website to give LREDA a gracious, helpful and professional public face. Her work with personnel from meeting sites, often challenging, has been amazing. For me personally, she has been a steady and resourceful connection, always there and full of ideas – a solutions person! There is much more. Shannon, on behalf of all of us, thank you, thank you! We will miss you and wish for you much happiness in the next chapters of your life!

Finally, this is my last newsletter column! It is hard for me to believe! These have been a very busy and satisfying four years! It has been a privilege to work with and get to know so many of our colleagues. There is no group I have ever experienced with the amount of energy, good humor,

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President's Column, continued

deep kindness, can-do spirit and overall smarts about life as a group of religious educators! But, in truth, I am not ready to say good-bye for real just yet, just to write this last article! I still have much to do before GA and look forward to these last few months with you! And, I am looking forward to the leadership of incoming President Anne Bancroft, already doing a great job serving on the Board as President-Elect.

To all, may your spring be filled with new life and hope!

Susan

Susan Archer, LREDA President

Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes

Cindy Leitner, LREDA At-Large for GA

I'm not sure what David Bowie meant with his song, but my interpretation of the first line is that change is hard for all of us—so hard we stumble and stutter to get the word out. The good news, however, is that religious educators tend of necessity to be a flexible group, so we will adapt easily to some changes in LREDA programming at GA this year.

The first is that, sadly, we will not have a Fahs Lecture this year. The speaker we contracted with last year has declined to participate in a GA sited within a restricted zone with security screening procedures in place.

Our GA workshop has changed to reflect the reality of the site situation this year. A panel will reflect on classism within Unitarian Universalism—powerful and deep food for thought. Don't forget the PLCC workshops which

From Our President Elect

Anne Bancroft, DRE, First Unitarian Society, W. Newton, MA

Dear LREDA Members: As President-elect, I have spent this year getting to know your LREDA Board and learning the ins and outs of all that we do together as an organization. I am so excited by our potential, and by the opportunity to work with you all to continue growing and professionalizing on our journeys as Religious Educators. Please say hello if you see me at our Professional Day in Fort Lauderdale, or during General Assembly. If not there, at our Fall Conference in Albuquerque, or even by e-mail. (fusnre@fusn.org) I hope you'll join in, as we continue to build on the firm foundations of our predecessors.

Blessed be,
Anne



sound intriguing. And remember to meet up with old friends, buy LREDA merchandise, browse for good ideas, and volunteer some time at the LREDA Booth!

The food prices for our LREDA meals together were very high, resulting in an increase in the cost of Professional Day registration. We also decided to combine our Annual Meeting with a dessert this year rather than a luncheon.

Our Professional Day should be stellar again this year with worship, Joseph Cornell's keynote on "Finding the Divine in Nature," and four excellent but varied workshops—a little bit of something for everyone.

Check out the information about all the events and find the various forms in the packet.

SEE YOU IN FLORIDA!

HELP US KNOW WHO AMONG US HAS BEEN IN ACTIVE SERVICE AS A RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR FOR 25 YEARS OR MORE! We want to honor them at our Professional Day worship service in Fort Lauderdale. We want to include not only those who have just reached 25 years, but also any who may have reached that mark some time before whom we have not known about to include in past recognitions at this worship service. However, we need to know who you are! Please email (sarcher@cedarlane.org) if you have served as a professional religious educator for at least 25 years as of June 2008 so that your name can be read at this service! Or if you know of someone in this category, please let us know!

Free GA Registration Opportunity!

Over the years, recruiting folks to staff the LREDA booth at GA has become a task the Board could happily pass off to someone else. We would love to find someone who can take on the job of coordinating the staffing of the booth at each GA. This person would be good with the public, enjoy networking with religious educators, and be able to spend whatever time was necessary to make sure the booth was staffed for the 40 hours in the four days of GA that the Exhibit Hall is open. The Booth Coordinator would train new folks (it's all written out), replenish materials as needed, and coordinate with the Treasurer to deal with money collected daily. The Coordinator would

be expected to cover much of the staffing, working out meal breaks and other time off with volunteers s/he recruits.

The Booth Coordinator would *not* be responsible for putting up or dismantling the exhibit (we have someone to do that). In exchange for staffing the booth and coordinating the volunteers, LREDA is offering one paid Early-bird GA Registration fee.

If interested, please respond to Cindy Leitner at: cbleitner@hotmail.com

Good Offices Training

Good Offices training during this year's Professional Days at GA will explore the proposed new LREDA Guidelines because they so influence the expectations of and provide tools for our religious educators and their congregations. The first half of our training will be understanding our roles as good officers and the second half of the training will be joining the proposed new LREDA Guidelines conversation.

The next good offices training will be held just before the LREDA Fall Conference.

LREDA Fall Conference 2008 - Save the Date

Friday, October 24 – Monday, October 27 Albuquerque, New Mexico

Building A Multigenerational Faith

Creating Wholeness in Our Congregations

Keynote Speaker, The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker will share her vision of our Unitarian Universalist congregations as integrative, holistic sites that foster wholeness and liberation. Workshops covering topics from Spiritual Eldering to Multigenerational worship, social justice and mentoring will be led by UUA District & Headquarters staff and lifespan faith development practitioners. Our Odyssey presenter will be Rev. Pat Hoertdoerfer, for many years director of children's and family programming at the UUA. There will be small group time, professional interest gatherings free-time options, fellowship and fun. Please read the flyer enclosed in this packet and look for registration materials later this spring.

Now is the time to encourage your colleagues to join LREDA and plan to attend the fall con. Scholarships are available. Visit LREDA website www25.uua.org/lreda for applications.

LREDA LARGE Add-on Day

This year's LARGE Add-on Day program following Fall Conference will feature Rev. Robert Latham, presenting "Shared Ministry Challenges: Moving from Temporary to Permanent Solutions." This program focuses on the needs and challenges of religious educators serving large RE programs, in particular; however, other LREDA members are welcome to attend. Look for the flyer in your next LREDA mailing!

No Longer O.P.!

We are happy to report that we have re-reprinted Joan Goodwin's book, *Giving Birth To Ourselves: A History of the Liberal Religious Educators Association, 1949-1999*. Thanks, LREDA Publications Committee! This important history provides the details that impact who we are now. If you want a copy go on our website (www25.uua.org/lreda) or contact Shannon Hawkins. You may also want to put in an order for *Claiming the Past, Shaping the Future: Four Eras in Liberal Religious Education, 1790-1999* edited by Roberta Nelson! Great companion volumes!

LREDA Guidelines—Updated and Revised!

Patti Withers, CRE/ML, DRE, First UU Church, Houston, TX, LREDA Board for Member Concerns

The revised and updated LREDA *Guidelines for Professional Religious Educators* are finished and will be voted on at the June Membership Meeting. It has been a long process, starting almost 18 months ago with a request for members to email suggestions and concerns to the LREDA Board. We incorporated almost all of your ideas and wrestled with wording. During Fall Conference 2007, members

were given an opportunity to look at the revised document and make further suggestions and comments. The Board again wrestled with content and wording, but developed a finished document during its 2008 winter Board meeting. One of the Professional Day workshops will concentrate on examining and discussing the changes.

The proposed Guidelines and the existing Guidelines are posted on the LREDA website for your perusal.

News from the RE Education Futures Committee

Susan Archer, MRE, Cedar Lane UU Church, Bethesda, MD, and president of LREDA

I am excited to report to you about the beginning work of the LREDA RE Education Futures Committee. In the fall of 2006 the Board voted to make it a priority to explore the needs for continuing education and for seminary/graduate education in Religious Education for UU religious educators and all ministers. We have been concerned about inadequacies in scope and depth of educational preparation as well as the lack of availability of educational opportunities. This impacts all of us, from those beginning in the field, to those who want paths to professional development beyond Renaissance modules but do not want to be credentialed or ordained, to those seeking course opportunities in order to reach competencies in the Credentialing program, to those who want graduate level and seminary work of all kinds. In consequence, in the months that followed we chartered a new

LREDA committee to address our concerns.

The committee met on February 12-13 and had a very productive meeting. The first meeting was funded by the UUA Panel on Theological Education. We have high hopes that the work coming out of this committee – a detailed strategic plan for improving the range, quality and accessibility of RE education for UU religious professionals – will have long range impact on our life as religious educators and on our liberal faith movement. The work will also involve nurturing partnerships with the many UU groups and institutions which also share a stake in the future of education in religious education for religious professionals. Barry Andrews chairs this new committee. Other members include Marge Corletti, Betsy Darr, Pat Ellenwood, Dick Gilbert, Betsy Pugh and me (as Board liaison). Keep watching for more reports about this work!

Chapter Chats *Patti Withers, CRE/ML, DRE, First UU Church, Houston, TX, LREDA Board for Member Concerns*

Central Midwest District: The CMWD LREDA Chapter Fall Symposium met at a beautiful retreat center on Lake Michigan with an attendance of 26 full and part time participants. Participants were religious educators from small and large congregations (including several new DREs and one interim MRE) and two district staff people. Due to the generosity of members, four scholarships were offered that permitted DREs from small congregations to attend. Worship framed the retreat. The working sessions focused on lifespan spiritual development. The group built a bonfire on the lake shore and roasted marshmallows until late into the evening. The temperature was only a few degrees above freezing but the warmth of friendship made it a time of joy. Ann Barker is Chapter Chair.

Ohio-Meadville District: The chapter enjoyed a January retreat at Sandscreech, WV, which included worship, personal and professional sharing, and two small programs. The first offered a demonstration and discussion of the “peace table” model for addressing children’s behavior in Spirit Play sessions. The second featured a discussion of the results of our taking the Keirsey Temperament Sorter and how these impact our interactions in committee and program work. Camaraderie and learning were the high points of what has fast become an annual, enthusiastic event in this district. New Chapter officers include President Kathy Strawser, Vice-President Greta Porter, Secretary George Buchanan and Treasurer Diana VanWinkle.

Mountain Desert District: The chapter is fairly active despite their large geographic area. Several MDD LREDA Chapter members attended the week long Religious Education Leadership School in Colorado last August. The 2008 Chapter Retreat in Woodland Park Colorado (a mountain town outside of Colorado Springs.) will include an add-on day Workshop on Compassionate Communication. The Chapter also met at the MDD Annual Meeting in October. Several DRE’s have either entered the credentialing program or plan to enter it in the near future. Eleanor VanDeusen is the Chapter Treasurer and unofficial interim chair.

Lifespan Learning Updates from the CUC

According to Sylvia Bass West, Director of Lifespan Learning for the Canadian Unitarian Council, there is increasing cross border cooperation.

An agreement of good faith and collaborative endeavors between the UUA and CUC is in process.

Gini Courter and Kay Montgomery of the UUA and Mary Bennett and Jean Pfeleiderer of the CUC are in continuing dialogue.

The UUA is making resources and training manuals youth programming such as Spirituality Development Conferences, Leadership Development Conferences and Advisor Trainings available to the CUC.

A new *Small Congregations as Lifespan Learning Communities* workshop has been developed collaboratively between Sylvia and Rev. Helen Zidowecki and is

being field tested in Kingston, Ontario this spring. Canadians will now be able to participate in the UUA RE credentialing program and Credentialed Canadians seeking positions will have access to the same open web search process as American RE Credentialed professionals.

The CUC’s Annual Conference and Meeting, *The Web of Life, In Our Hands*, will be in Ottawa in May. The Administration Renaissance Module is being offered just prior to the conference and Ginger Luke will be leading a LREDA workshop. Colleagues from the USA are warmly welcomed to Ottawa. Information is available at <http://www.cuc.ca/conference/2008/index.htm>.

UUSC Has a New Adult Education Resource

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is pleased to announce the development of Covenant Group Ministry resources. With these resources, UUSC supports members of the UU community in: the search for connection with each other and the larger global community; the quest for meaningful engagement with life’s most challenging questions; and the pursuit to engage more effectively with local, national, and global social justice initiatives.

Through the Covenant Group model of intimacy and ultimacy, participants will be inspired to take action on human rights issues that affect our global community. Individuals will find the strength and courage to take simple action steps or lead social justice projects that will ultimately help to change the world.

Covenant Group resources are focused on major UUSC program areas, such as civil liberties and the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. The modules offer instruction and structure for new groups seeking meaningful exploration around UUSC social justice issues. UUSC covenant group resources are suitable for:

- New covenant groups or small group ministry circles seeking to bridge social justice work with community building and faith development
 - Social justice committees seeking to create connections and community amongst its members
- Adult education groups

To download these free resources, visit their website at www.uusc.org/congregations/covenantgroups/

~LREDA Milestones~

New Positions:

Sheri Phillabaum, DLRE, at the First UU Church of San Antonio. She formerly served the UU Church of Corpus Christi for 7 ½ years.

Ann Willever, MRE, will be installed as Family Minister at the First Universalist Society in Franklin, MA, on May 4.

Positions Resigned:

Ann Barker, CRE-ML, DRE at Fox Valley UU Fellowship, Appleton, WI, after 13+ years of service

Dawn Star Borchelt, CRE, DRE, Davies Memorial UU Church, Camp Springs, MD, for the past 10 years

Kevin Drewery, Director of Lifespan Faith Development at the UU Congregation of Las Vegas for the past 5 years, will be studying for an MDiv at Starr King as he pursues his goal of becoming an MRE.

Shannon Hawkins, LREDA Administrator *par excellence* for the past 5 years

Retirements:

Vivienne Harmon Chapman, MRE, announces “with some reluctance” her retirement as of January 1, 2008 at age 80. She began as a part time DRE in the Milton, MA, Unitarian Church in 1969 and later served congregations in Concord, MA; New Orleans; All Souls Church in Washington, DC; Toledo, OH; Lubbock, TX; and Barnstable, MA. From 2001-2006 she was RE consultant for the Ballou-Channing District. She was accredited as a DRE in 1974 and ordained in 1989.

Other recognitions:

Elizabeth M. Strong, MRE, PC for UU Mass Bay, will celebrate her 25th year of ordination at this year’s GA.

Dori Davenport, Faith Development & Growth Director for the CMwD, will be celebrating 10 years in her current position and 25 years as a religious educator.

Carol Taylor, MRE, PC for the JPD, will be receiving an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School during their June commencement.

Pat Kahn, DRE, UU Congregation of Atlanta, has joined the LREDA Integrity Team.

Sherri Glebus, DRE, Champlain Valley UU Society, Middlebury, VT, was awarded an M.A. in Religion, Spirituality and Women’s Studies from Union Institute and University.

Credentialed in October, 2007

Jean Wiant, CRE, DLRE, UU Fellowship of Centre County, State College, PA

Dana Regan, CRE, DYP, First Unitarian Church of Portland, OR

Connie Dunn, CRE—Associate, DLRE, Hopedale Unitarian Parish, MA

Tandy Scheffler, CRE—Masters, DRE, UU Church of Charlotte, NC



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About LREDA...

LREDA is an anti-racist, welcoming, professional organization open to liberal religious educators and those supportive of religious education. LREDA promotes the religious growth and learning of people of all ages and advocates for and supports religious educators and the field of liberal religious education. LREDA does this by providing continuous education, networking and sharing resources, advocating for professional recognition, and providing assistance and encouragement for religious educators. We offer a common forum where we can learn from and share with one another the great variety of skills and depth of knowledge which we, together, possess.

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Please send your original submissions, letters, articles, and book, tape, DVD and video reviews to Gaia Brown, copy editor, at gaiabrown@aol.com