

Report on the UUA Board of Trustees
October 2005 Meeting
From Charles Blustein Ortman,
Metro NY District UUA Trustee

The Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association met from Wednesday, October 12th through Sunday, October 16th. It seems that weather very often plays a major factor at these Board of Trustee (BOT) meetings and this one was no exception. It rained from before our arrival until the wee hours of Sunday morning. By the time of our departure, Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney (whom I often disagree with) had declared many portions of the state to be disaster areas. He will get no argument from me on that account. As has become my custom, I'll report here some of the highlights and points of interest from the meeting and encourage you to go to the <http://www.uua.org> website for particular details of the business proceedings.

President Bill Sinkford reported that the response to the UUA/UUSC Gulf Relief Fund effort had been incredibly successful, to the tune of \$2.3 million. With a recent matching-grant pledge established by the Veatch Foundation of the Shelter Rock congregation, Bill reported that it was likely that funds raised for the Gulf relief among Unitarian Universalist would exceed \$3 million. He also reported that approximately two thirds of that amount would be extended for the promotion of civic outreach especially to assist individuals from marginalized groups who often have difficulty in accessing various funding programs. Roughly one third of the money would go toward assuring a strong Unitarian Universalist Congregational presence in New Orleans. The BOT passed a resolution of gratitude and appreciation to the administration, staff, donors, Crises Ministry Team and all the many UU's who had contributed so much of their time and energy so that we might have an effective impact in the wake of the hurricane disasters. In yet another area of discussion Bill reported on the continuing exploratory conversations regarding the possibilities of merger between our two Unitarian Universalist seminaries, Meadville/Lombard and Starr King School for the Ministry. He reported that there was progress in the conversations but that no outcome could be predicted at this time. Finally, he reported on the many difficulties that had been faced by the Pathways Congregation, an extension program which was designed to produce a large UU congregation in Texas. The results of the effort were far below the expectations that had been set out. Bill reported on the disappointment as well as some of the learnings from this experience. You can read more about it at http://www.uua.org/cde/newcong/Pathways_TransitionWGS.pdf.

In her report, Kay Montgomery reported that the response for the new and more frequently publicized electronic versions of the UU World Magazine on the web site had been overwhelmingly positive. She reported on the impact of the generosity from the Veatch foundation on the annual budget including \$250,000 to justice, \$200,000 to growth and development, and \$200,000 to youth and religious education development. She also reported on efforts toward creating safe staffing practices among Unitarian Universalist Association employees.

Two other items of note...1) The board passed a just immense to the budget for FY 2006, which can be found online at http://www.uua.org/TRUS/FY06_Budget.pdf. 2) Following the consultation which I reported from last spring's BOT meeting on Ministry for and with Youth, an entire program has been developed for congregations and district to explore and envision a way of revitalizing this essential Ministry. Congregations are asked to engage in exploratory programs to this end. Dozens of congregations across the continent have already committed to doing so. If you would like to know what you can do in your congregation, please visit this following web site at <http://www.uua.org/TRUS/youth>.

As we blow or are blown through autumn, I hope you all enjoying the beautiful fall colors, and are staying warm and especially dry. See you in the district.