

**Report on the UUA Board of Trustees
Meeting of January 20-21, 2007**

**From Charles Blustein Ortman
Metro NY District UUA Trustee**

While the official business meeting of the UUA Board is from Saturday morning through Sunday afternoon, there is much work done in Boston prior to and following the meeting. I arrived in Boston at noon on Thursday, January 19th, and my first meeting was at 1:00pm with the Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multiculturalism Committee. The full Board gathered for supper, worship and then an evening of deep conversations ranging from Policy Governance issues to exploration of the new Congregations Come First dialogues that are going on in districts throughout the Association.

Friday was a day of Working Group meetings and I am the Convener of the Living Our Faith (justice) Working Group. Friday evening, members of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee held a mock MFC panel so that Board members could get a feel for the process. Yours truly was the candidate in question. I didn't do too badly, but I was glad it wasn't the real thing!

Following the Board meeting on Sunday, the Coordinating Council (COCO) met to debrief and begin planning the agenda for the next meeting in April. As the end of my term on the Board draws near, I am keenly aware of how much I have come to know, respect, admire and enjoy my fellow Board members. This is a rich experience for which I am grateful to have had the opportunity.

As always, if you are interested in the nitty-gritty of the meeting details, I suggest that you go to the UUA.org website where the full notes and minutes are available for viewing. Some of the highlights as I see them:

- President Bill Sinkford's report was inspired, as usual. He gave a very promising report on our potential for growth based on market research from our various public relations programs over the last three years. Bill also talked about the beginnings of a plan to support ministers of color and latino/a heritage and congregations in what looks like an excellent step towards the UUA becoming an Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression/Multicultural institution.
- Executive Vice President Kay Montgomery reported on an upcoming "Association Sunday," which all congregations will be asked to participate in next fall. She also gave a preliminary report on the UUA/UUSC Gulf Coast relief efforts. A summit to better institutionalize volunteerism in the Gulf will be held this spring. Kay also mentioned our newest unofficial congregation – the Church of the Second Life. This is a virtual congregation that is always open to visitors 24/7, and holds a worship service each Thursday evening at 8:00. One must enter by taking on an "Avatar" and I'm guessing that if you don't know, or want to know what that is, you might not be interested!

- Moderator Gini Courter reported on her widely traveled schedule representing the UUA in so many ways. She is particularly pleased to have spent some time in New Orleans working on construction with other volunteers. She reports that Unitarian Universalists have made a very large, positive impression on the people there.
- Board Secretary, Paul Richter, reported that, so far, none of the elections to be held this year at General Assembly are contested. He also reminds us that the deadline for congregational certification, February 1st, is rapidly approaching.
- The Board passed over a dozen motions, most significant among them was the passage of a balanced budget of a \$24,065,158 budget for FY 2008; passage of continuing the process of moving towards a policy governance model of Board governance and practice.
- A reminder from the UUA Accessibilities Committee about how easy it could be to make our houses of worship so much more accessible to so many people by making some very doable adjustments. I will attach a list of their suggestions that you may find quite useful. [Available at <http://uumetrony.org/services/accessibility.htm>]

Again, it is my privilege to serve you in this capacity, and I thank you for it.

Until the next time,

Charlie Ortman