

Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY **October 2015**

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Sunday Services | October 2015

October 4 | *Toolbox of Faith*
This Sunday we will celebrate the ministries of teaching (and learning) in our community. We'll also reflect on some enduring wisdom from the history of liberal religious education.
- Celie Katovitch

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October 11 | *Let Us Play*
Sometimes we equate play with the silly and the frivolous. We almost always talk about it as an age-specific endeavor. Today, we older folks will contemplate why play matters-- not just for our young ones, but for ourselves.
- Celie Katovitch

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October 18 | *Bread Sunday*
Join us for a joyful service culminating in the chance to break bread together, in this annual First Universalist tradition.
- Celie Katovitch

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October 25 | *One Like the Sea*
Let's take a trip abroad with Frederick Douglass across the Atlantic seeking evidence to combat racism and global support for racial equality at home. What will we find? What will we learn? What message does Douglass have for us 150 years later? Are we various as the waves or one like the sea?
-Verdis Robinson. Patti Goodwin, Worship Associate

Regular service begins at 10:30am



Pastor's Perspective

Message from Rev. Celie Katovitch

Fall was late in coming this year, but now it is upon us. Walking to my car in the morning these days, I begin to notice the first of the fallen leaves crinkling about my feet, eddying on the breeze as I walk. I listen, hoping to catch some whisper of what they have to say.

This year, the season of autumn teaches me about surrender. It is a season of letting go, as the leaves do now-- without protest, without dismay. It's a season of opening ourselves to natural cycles of life and death, the greater currents in which we move.

We tend to think of surrender as something negative, a sign of weakness. (Perhaps we confuse surrender with submission.) In truth, though, surrender is a form of liberation. It is not only a positive thing, but an act of power: a courageous acceptance and willingness to meet life in its fullness, wherever we may find ourselves. And in that meeting we, like the leaves, may find beauty and vibrancy. Everything changes, most things pass away, and yet Life endures. Surrender is the embrace of this truth. It is the ability to see--in the same instant--the transience of all that is, and the blessedness of all that is. It is knowing that our lives are indeed woven through with letting-go, while at the same time being able to hold an abiding amazement--and gratitude--for the fact that we live; that this world, in its color and splendor, is even here at all. Edna St. Vincent Millay captures this feeling in a poem:

O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!
Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!
Thy mists, that roll and rise!
Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag
And all but cry with colour! ...
World, World, I cannot get thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,
But never knew I this;
Here such a passion is
As stretcheth me apart,—Lord, I do fear
Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year...

O world, we cannot hold thee close enough! So may it ever be. May beauty be a faithful teacher for each of us; may it awaken our souls this fall.

In faith, --Celie

Compassion Meditation Group

Join Rev. Celie in an exploration of compassion as a spiritual practice in the weeks leading up to the holidays. We'll meet once a week for three weeks in November. For a foundation, we will learn compassion meditation, as inspired by the Buddhist tradition, gradually building up to 15 minutes of practice at a time. We will also explore spiritual practices from historic Unitarianism and Universalism, to see how resources from our own tradition might deepen our compassion practice. This will be an informal group, with no prior meditation experience required.

If you are interested in participating, please take a moment to complete the poll at the link below.
Thank you!

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/H8RDZBT

Evening Worship Opportunity:

On Friday, October 23rd, join John Akers and Rev. Celie for an uplifting evening service of singing and sharing. Come to light a candle, place a stone, voice prayers, sorrows, and gratitudes, and most of all, to have your heart lifted by song. The service (partly inspired by last year's discussion of "help/ thanks/ wow!" as a UU typology of prayer), begins at 7 and lasts approximately 45 minutes.

Membership Request

Submitted by Nancy Gaede

During October, we will be asking you to confirm or update your directory information.

Please look for more information in the Clara Barton lounge.

Thanks in advance for your help.



Walking Together:

Director of Life Span Faith Development

Submitted by Michelle Yates, DRE

UUs tend to be a pretty brainy group. We love facts and statistics, ideas and creativity. But what do we do for fun? October and Halloween embraces the frightening, but at the heart of all the festivities is a sense of playfulness.

If there is one thing I've learned in recent years as a mom, it's the value of Play. Granted, it is easier to experience play when you have "Play Consultants", or children," to help you out, but inherently we all know how to do it, even as adults. And the bonus for us "brainy people," is that nothing lights up the brain like play! Neuroscience shows that play activity is significantly tied to brain development and function.

So let's embrace PLAY as our Faith Development theme this month!

Consider, what does it mean to you to be Playful? Who do you feel comfortable being "playful" with? What kind of play do you enjoy? Do it once per week. Try a new kind of play. Dive in. Play a Game. Take something apart. Laugh. Be silly. Watch a comedy. Do that thing you think will be fun! Finish this phrase at least 5 different funny ways, "It's all fun and games until…. "

Come visit **the Strong National Museum of Play** with other church members on **Sunday, October 11th after church**/12 noon. (Ask me about getting group rates- edu@uuroc.org) Our First Universalist kids and families are excited to show you around!

If you're still not inspired, check out these great resources!

Play Resources

12 Places to Experience Fabulous Fall Fun
http://www.rocparent.com/things-to-do/places-to-go/fabulous-fall-fun-rochester/

UU World
The Wisdom of Play
http://www.uuworld.org/articles/wisdom-play

Four Fabulous TED talks on Play:
Jane McGonigal: Game Can Give You 10 Extra Years of Life https://www.ted.com/talks/jane_mcgonigal_the_game_that_can_give_you_10_extra_years_of_life?language=en

Steve Keil
Manifesto for Play
http://www.ted.com/talks/steve_keil_a_manifesto_for_play_for_bulgaria_and_beyond?language=en

Tim Brown:
Creativity and Play
http://www.ted.com/talks/tim_brown_on_creativity_and_play?language=en

Stuart Brown:
Play is more than fun, it is vital
http://www.ted.com/talks/stuart_brown_says_play_is_more_than_fun_it_s_vital?language=en

Have Fun! ~Michelle

You're Invited on a Field Trip!!

For our 2nd Sunday Inter-generational Activity we will be embracing this month's faith development theme of Play and going to the **Strong National Museum of Play**! We can walk over from church, it's so close!

October 11th, 12 noon.

Have you never been? *Has it been forever?*
Many people miss out on this gem because they don't have kids to take them. Well, our First Universalist children are excited to show you around, and give you an excuse to come and play!

RSVP if you know you are interested so we can look into group rates
Michelle Yates, edu@uuroc.org or 585-310-2484.

Welcome
Rev. Sarah Gillespie

Our New Community Minister Affiliated!

The Rev. Sarah Gillespie is a Chaplain Resident at the University of Rochester Medical Center. She received her M. Div. from Andover Newton Theological School in 2014. Passionate about the intersection of spirituality and public health, she feels a deep calling to chaplaincy. In her down time, Sarah recharges through singing (sometime with her ukulele), walking, journaling and watching baseball. She travels through life with her husband, Adam.

Community Minister FAQs

What is an affiliated community minister?
An affiliated community minister (or simply a community minister) is a Unitarian Universalist minister in fellowship whose ministry is not in a church, but out in the community. Community ministers in preliminary fellowship, like Rev. Sarah, are required to affiliate with a local congregation to connect to our movement and also receive support during her early years of ministry.

Does a community minister work for the church?
A community minister is not employed by the church. Our community minister works full-time as a healthcare chaplain and offers her gifts and presence at the church when able.

Here is an excerpt from the UU Society for Community Ministry: Affiliating with a community minister means that you are developing a special relationship with a minister working outside the congregation. As part of the affiliation agreement, the congregation may agree to compensate the minister for some work performed within the congregation such as guest preaching, pastoral summer coverage, consulting with a lay committee, etc. The minister may also agree to do some work within the congregation without remuneration such as an annual sermon, and/or teaching a religious education class.

Does this change the structure of the staff? Who do I see if I have a pastoral/ ministerial need?
This does not change the structure of the staff. Rev. Celie, the Parish Minister, is still the person to see with any pastoral needs or church questions.

What are the ministerial duties and delights of affiliation?
The community minister is in covenant and affiliation with the church and the Parish Minister. Any duties such as pastoral care, preaching or teaching, are decided upon by both ministers. In general, the duties of a community minister are out in the world, enacting our UU values and ethics in settings outside the church. The community minister delights in being a part of a congregation and receiving support in form of a Committee on Ministry that will help evaluate her work in the community.

What are the congregational duties and delights of affiliation?

The congregation delights in sharing and supporting a new UU minister. They get to be part of her ministry in the world and witness what UU ministry looks like outside the church. The only duties are providing a few members to serve on the community minister's committee on ministry, which will also be composed of members of the community minister's work site.

Adult Religious Education

UU History

Meets the following Wednesdays from 6:30-8:30pm

Oct 7th- Part 2
European Unitarianism: Transylvania and Beyond
Nov 4th- Part 3
American Unitarians: Organic & Imported
Dec 2nd- Part 4
Universalism: Murray to Ballou

We will be watching one of the six hour long videos produced by Ron Cordes for the series *Long Strange Trip: 2000 years of UU History*, followed by facilitated discussion and conversation.

Feel free to come to one or all sessions as you can. Please RSVP so we can plan for enough space and seating to Michelle Yates at edu@uuroc.org or 585-310-2484.

Childcare available if requested a week in advance.

Voicings

Submitted by the Communications Committee

Happy new church year! The Communications Committee is back at work, refreshed after the summer break. Here's what we're up to so far this year.

Summer was transition time! We bid farewell to member Nancy Gaede, as she was elected to the Board of Trustees in June. We'll miss you Nancy! We also bid farewell to Kris White, ex-officio member of the committee and former church Office Manager, who moved from Rochester to be closer to family this summer. Thanks for all your support, Kris! We welcome our new Office Manager, Melissa Davies, and look forward to sitting down with you at our October meeting to meet and connect with you as part of the committee.

The bulletin boards in the Clara Barton Lounge have a new look. Note how committee space now flows across church activities. Although Communication Committee provides the overall format and appearance, the Board of Trustees and each individual committee have the responsibility for choosing what is displayed.

Communications Committee will be leading a short workshop on communication among church leadership and members at the Leadership Assembly on October 3rd. Led by Connie Valk, it will be informative, and looks to be fun, too! In preparation for the Assembly we looked at our committee job description and made some proposed clarifications. Because communicating our purpose and scope is also an important part of communication.

Over the next few months we will resume our evaluation of the church web site, with the goal of revamping the site. We are not only trying to improve the function of the site, but also looking at the impressions that are given to site visitors and seeing how we can improve how we communicate our church's brand to our congregation and to the community.

Our committee membership is: Lisa Gwinner (chair), Reverend Celie Katovitch, Marcy Klein, Newcomb Losh, and Connie Valk, David Damico (newsletter editor) and, Melissa Davies (office manager). Please contact us if you have questions, thoughts, ideas about church communications. ✣

Save Your Pennies… And Save The Dates!

Submitted by Ann Rhody for the Finance Committee

Even if you're not great with numbers, it's easy to help First Universalist stay financially healthy! Here's how:

- Save your loose change and bring it all to church for our **Change Drive** on November 1 and 8- we'll pool our coins to help our church's programs!
- Our annual **Holiday Shoppe** will take place on five consecutive Sundays from November 22 to December 20. You can help by…..
  - Donating items to sell at the shoppe: baked goods, handcrafted items, new items that can be sold for under $15 or $20
  - Volunteering to help staff the table in the lounge after the service on one of the Sundays. Contact Paula Marchese for information on opportunities.
  - Doing some of your holiday shopping with us!
- Save the date for our **annual Service Auction**: Sunday, February 7 after the service! Think of what you can donate or whether you can volunteer to help. More details to come later in the Fall.

The finance team is looking forward to some FUN fund-raising with all of you! ✣

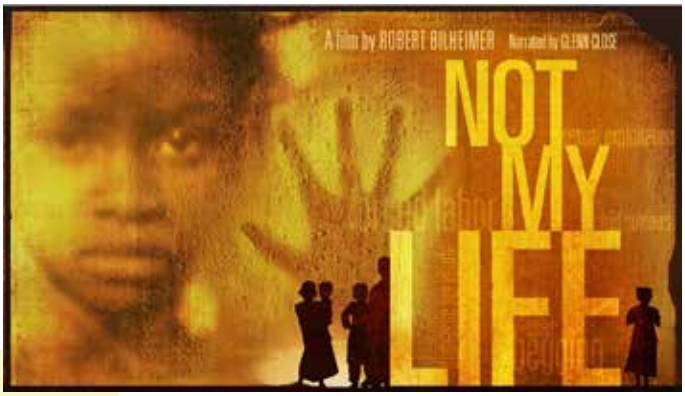
Rural & Migrant Ministry

Harvesting Justice Symposium, Reception & Dinner

Submitted by Connie Valk



Join us at Temple B'rith Kodesh, 2131 Elmwood Avenue, Rochester, NY 14618 Thursday, October 29, 2015. First Universalist is represented on R&MM's Board. We are forming a UU table to lend our voice to advocate for those who, in spite of harsh working conditions, bring food to our tables. The cost of the symposium before the dinner is $50 per person. The dinner plus reception is $50 extra. Part of the cost makes it possible for farmworkers to join us at the event.
Contact Connie Valk cvalk@frontiernet.net for more details, and to make your reservation by October 15. ✣



Free Film Viewing

Submitted by Elizabeth Osta

Sunday October 18th at 6:30 p.m. (**64 min.**)

Discussion to follow facilitated by Kitty Forbush and Elizabeth Osta
First Universalist Church of Rochester
Free will donation will be sent to *Not My Life*.

Filmed on five continents, in a dozen countries, *Not My Life* takes viewers into a world where millions of children are exploited, every day, through an astonishing array of practices including forced labor, domestic servitude, begging, sex tourism, sexual violence, and child soldiering.

"Human traffickers are earning billions of dollars on the backs and in the beds of our children," says the film's director, Academy Award nominee, Robert Bilheimer, "and yet no one knows this is happening. We have a huge responsibility, right now, to learn the truth and act on it." Not My Life's message is ultimately one of hope. Victims of slavery can be set free and go on to live happy and productive lives. Those who advocate for slavery victims are growing in numbers, and are increasingly effective.

A Social Justice Committee *Thanks*

The Social Justice Committee would like to give a sincere thank-you to the members if the First Universalist Society for their generous contribution to the organization TEEN EMPOWERMENT.

We collected $597.00 for this worthy organization and thus are able to support and bring hope to teens throughout our neighborhood community!

Becky, Sarah, Shirley | Social Justice Plate Committee.

Welcome to Our New Staff Members!

Submitted by Rev. Celie Katovitch

We are thrilled to welcome two new members to our staff this year.

Music Director **Carol Xiong** comes to us from the Eastman School of Music, where she is completing a year in the school's competitive "Take Five" program. The program allows time to work on an individualized research project. Carol earned her Bachelor of Music from Eastman in 2015, double-majoring in music theory and piano performance. Along with her many musical gifts, Carol brings a variety of passions and life experiences to our music ministry. Welcome, Carol!

Office Administrator **Melissa Davies** comes to us with an extensive background in nonprofit service, graphic design, and church management. She recently relocated from Syracuse to Rochester with her husband, and newborn daughter. Melissa brings creativity, warmth, and a passion for helping others to her work. Welcome, Melissa!



You can read more about Melissa and Carol on the "staff" page of our church website, and extend them a warm welcome when you see them at First Universalist.

RAIHN Dates

Submitted by Marti Eggers

Next training session – Tuesday, October 13th, 6:30 pm, Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 4115 Dewey Avenue.

Next Second Level Training Session (designed for seasoned volunteers who would like to delve deeper into the stresses and traumas and other aspects of Homelessness) – Wednesday, November 4th from 6:30 – 8 pm at the First Presbyterian Church, 25 Church Street, Pittsford.

Next Host Week at First Universalist – January 3rd – January 10th, 2016!
Please consider giving a little of your time to our RAIHN families. They would be so grateful.

Living Our Values, Making A Difference

Submitted by Newcomb Losh, Communications Committee

This September, we once again partnered with St. Mary's Church to host five homeless families in the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (RAIHN) program. Together, we provided meals, activities and lodging from Sept 13 to Sept. 20 as the parents worked at their jobs or with caseworkers to achieve sustainable independence.



Richard Reed, one of 50 volunteers, puts sheets on a guest bed at the start of the week.



Don Johnson (l) and Jill Ghysel (r), volunteers from St. Charles Borromeo via St. Maryís Church, prepared and served dinner on Sept. 18.

Photographs by Newcomb Losh



At the end of RAIHN Week, Mike Boze took down the baby gate that spanned the basement stairs.

At the end of the week, Kathy Russell was one of the volunteers to sweep guest rooms.





The 2015 Annual Meeting of the **New York State Convention of Universalists** (NYSCU), will be held October 23–24 at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta, New York.

Keynote speaker will be **Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed**

For more information, http://nyscu.org.

Photo by Christopher Mann, Paris, France

Auld Lang Syne

Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist



Construction of the second of three Universalist churches belonging to this congregation began in 1846 and the dedication took place on December 16 the following year. This church was located on South Clinton Ave., only two blocks north of our present location. The Universalist newspaper *Evangelical Magazine* and *Gospel Advocate* of January 7, 1848 published a notice which is given in an abridged form below.

"The Dedication of the new and beautiful church recently erected by the first Universalist society in Rochester took place on Wednesday morning. The services of the occasion were as follows:

1. Anthem by the Choir.
2. Prayer by [Rev. John Mather] Austin.
3. Hymn.
4. Reading Scriptures by [Rev. Stephen Rensselaer] Smith.
5. Hymn.
6. Sermon by [Rev. George Washington] Montgomery.
7. Dedicatory Prayer by [Rev. Dolphus] Skinner.
8. Benediction by Br. Montgomery.

The Church stands on the easterly side of the Genesee River, on a pleasant site, near the [Asbury] Methodist Church; it is built of brick, 86½ feet in length by 50 feet in width, of the Grecian style of architecture, with an excellent basement, (which though enclosed and plastered is not yet finished,) the Church proper being finished in a neat and plain, though rich and beautiful style throughout. The interior of the walls is handsomely marbleized, and overhead beautifully painted in fresco. There is a snug orchestra in the centre of the front a little elevated above the floor, for the choir and organ, on either side of which is a door of entrance to the body of the church. The pulpit and pews are finished in very good taste, the latter (86 in number we believe) being all uniformly cushioned with drab moreen, and the church furnished with a good organ, carpet, handsome chandeliers &c. The whole cost of the church, when finished, is estimated at $6,500. The lot cost $2,300, so that the whole will not exceed $9,000. The greater part of the debt is already paid. The society for the last two years has worshipped in Minerva Hall, and has raised during that time for the church property, sustaining meetings, and contingent expenses, over $8,000.

A little more than two years since, the Universalist society in Rochester was all but (perhaps we should say quite) dead, having lost their old church and been for years without preaching. The only outward signs of life were seen in a little band of faithful teachers and children in the form of a Sabbath School, headed and led on by our zealous Br. Geo. H. Roberts. Fortunately and providentially, Br. G. W. Montgomery at that time (two years ago) visited and preached in Rochester—a number of individuals were thereby aroused to see and feel the necessity of action—an effort was made to procure a suitable place for meeting and to retain Br. M. as their regular and permanent teacher, and succeeded.— The result of that effort is now before the world in the form of the beautiful church now dedicated and a respectable and we trust united and devoted society, and it speaks in no measured terms in praise of the zeal, faithfulness, and perseverance of Br. M. and his co-laborers.



News

Submitted by Keith Stott

How Many Wonderings Do You Have?

How many kinds of crystals are there? The diamond in a wedding ring is one beautiful example. However, there are many intriguing examples of the different kinds of things: atoms, gasses, liquids, and other kinds of crystals such as ice, snow, and metals. Have you or some child you know wanted the answers to such questions as the following: How do birds fly? How do x-rays works? Why do bubbles bounce from each other? To find the answers read *Concerning the Nature of Things* by Sir William Bragg, a book in our library. **Call number is 500 B**.

Drop-In Discussion Schedule, Oct. 2015

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. (except during the summer) in the adult lounge on the second floor of our church. Sometimes our discussions are based on certain books or articles, but you don't have to read anything or do any advance preparation to participate. Just drop in. People of all viewpoints are welcome to make presentations or join in the discussions.

October 4 | *Housing and Human Rights*
Please join philosopher and social justice activist George Payne for an interactive discussion on housing and human rights. Over the past ten years George has been involved with numerous anti-homelessness campaigns, including the Sanctuary Village movement in Rochester. He will discuss the difference between legal rights and moral rights, the need for governments to uphold the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and creative ways to mobilize for housing rights in our community. All are welcome! <www.gandhiearthkeepers.org>

October 11 | *14th Amendment*
The 14th Amendment to the Constitution protected the rights of newly-freed slaves by granting citizenship rights to all persons born in the United States. Now birthright citizenship is being granted to children of unauthorized immigrants. Harvey Rothbeind will lead a discussion of birthright citizenship and, time permitting, other aspects of the 14th Amendment.

October 18 | *Who Was Clara Barton?*
Phil Ebersole will provide background on this famous 19th century Universalist.

October 25 | *Making Government Respond*
How can citizens, organizations and local government be made to work together for the public good? Jessie Werner will present some ideas, based on her personal experience.

If you have a topic you'd like discussed or, better still, would be willing to lead a discussion, speak to Phil Ebersole.

For updates, check the bulletin board in the Clara Barton lounge or click on

https://philebersole.wordpress.com/drop-in-discussion-schedule/

House News, Oct. 2015

Submitted by Tom Ruganis

Welcome to autumn! Our fall cleanup day will be on Saturday, October 17th. Please save the date and consider helping to get our beautiful building polished up and ready for winter. Also if you have ANY areas of concern or ideas for the house committee, please feel free to let the house committee know.

A security note: The door from the parking lot to the Clara Barton Lounge was found unlocked early on a Monday morning. PLEASE make sure the door is securely locked if you are the last or one of the last few to leave after an event.

Here are other highlights of the building related activities.

- It never fails that the building has some challenges during RAIHN week. September was no different as the building's hot water heater decided that it no longer wanted to be in the hot water business. A new water heater was installed shortly after our guests left. Apologies to members, volunteers, and guests who had to clean up from RAIHN dinners, coffee hour and a Sunday evening dinner without hot water from the tap.
- The parking lot to be sealed and re-striped the day after this is being written. Again, we are sorry for the inconvenience.
- You may have noticed work crews tearing up Court St next to our Church. This is to repair and reconnect the steam line that provides heat to our building. Hopefully this will be completed by the time we need heat!
- The House Committee continues to work with the communications committee on new signage. More to come in the near future.
- The project to spruce up the second and third floor classroom hallways was completed. A new coat of paint was applied in preparation for possible wall murals.
- The chimes that were generously donated by a church member were recently installed in the Clara Barton Lounge.

As always, if you are interested in the above or have any other repair or project you would like to see completed, or would like to take on, please let anyone on the House Committee know. The Committee is currently: Tom Ruganis, Chair (tom@ruganis.net), Sarah Singal, Mary Vyverberg, Karen Dau, Marcy Klein, and Mike VanArsdale and Ed Deller.

We would love to hear from you!

First Universalist Church
150 South Clinton Avenue
Rochester, NY 14604

First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

Nurture the spirit and serve the community

First Universalist Church is a member of the Unitarian-Universalist Association, a liberal religion with historical roots from the Jewish and Christian traditions.

Worship service begins at 10:30am Sundays

Minister | Rev. Celie Katovitch
Director of Life Span Faith Development | Michelle Yates
Music Director | Carol Xiong
Sexton | Brandon Fagan
Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams
Office Administrator | Melissa Davies

***Office hours**, Tuesday through Friday, 8:30am–2:45pm. **Telephone** 585.546.2826*

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Editor, *This Week at First Universalist* (digital): TBA; Monthly newsletter *Our Outlook*, David Damico/Marcy Klein
More information is available on our website: http://uuroc.org.