"Religions may fight on the way to the goal, but at the end of the journey they become most intimate friends, and then they feel that they were all the time together on the same journey, only following different paths." -- Sri Chinmoy

**Quote of the Day**

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**Columns**

**Iran, North Korea and Unintended Consequences**
by Dr. George Wolfe

Peace education can be most concisely defined as "the study of conflict resolution through nonviolent means." Here resolution includes reconciliation, which seeks not merely to resolve conflict but also to restore working relationships between conflicting parties. One can also define peace studies as "the investigation of how to minimize the influence of the law of unintended consequences." [Continued...]

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**Global Trustee Election 2011-2012**

Global Trustee Election 2011-2012. The Global Council of Trustees (GC) is URI's primary governing body. The story: as of Dec 20 only six of the 50 North American CCs have certified themselves as eligible to participate in the election: Coalition of Welcoming Congregations, Interfaith Council of Stapleton, Northeast Tennessee CC of URI, Unity and Diversity World Council, Unity Made Visible and URI of Greater Baltimore. If your Cooperation Circle has not acted already there is still time. Please see the latest email from URI Hub Office [here](#). Actually it is pretty normal for the CCs to come through at the last minute for the GC election. Let's make it happen again this time around!

If you're considering becoming a Global Trustee but you have some questions about what that will take, you are welcome to contact Anne Roth, Global Trustee for N.America.

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**A Progressive Course of Conflict Management**
by Sandy Westin, URI in N.Am. Regional Coordinator

In the November issue of this newsletter I observed that peace work isn't always peace-full -- that even with the best of goals and intentions, people can find themselves caught up in interpersonal, or even inter-faction conflicts. I wrote at the time specifically of URI as an organization since I’m aware of such issues that occur at its
groups in America to get an idea of how large the movement has become. The Pluralism Project at Harvard University lists 909 organizations and I'm pretty sure that is an incomplete list since I personally know a few that were not included. More important than the numbers is the mission of all these groups, which are all variations on the themes of inclusion and unity.

As I read these figures, I found myself asking from what stirrings did we originally bring forth the existence of interfaith? ...Read more

The Adventure Forward
by Anne Roth, Global Trustee

In the centuries before people knew the world was round, they assumed that if you went too far you would fall off the edge. Without longitude or a concept of time zones, it's hard to know where you are. URI North America came to one of those edges this past fall. The Council and San Francisco executive staff realized we would need a different guide in order to move out into territory where this region has never been. As I write, the Search Committee is wading through dozens of resumes seeking the right person who can travel with us into the future. Read more...

News from URI North America

Atlanta, GA, The Trail of Dreams World Peace Walk Cooperation Circle completed its 13 Moon Walk for Peace on Friday, November 11 in Atlanta, Georgia. This 13-month journey to "awaken the heart of America" took them around the United States, through sixty of the poorest and most marginalized communities in the country, where they planted peace poles, joined in community service projects, and led community walks for peace. Read more...

Elsah, IL, The Euphrates Institute has over 20 undergraduate Fellows at Principia College conducting research, writing blogs, planning events, and seeking peace between Middle East and West as part of their college experience. The Fellows Program will soon be expanding to Tufts University in Boston.

Orange County, CA, Another great So Cal Bioregional was held on Nov 20 at Chapman University. The centerpiece was the West Coast premier of How to Boil a Frog and Q & A with filmmakers Jon Cooksey and Vandy Savage. See a report with photos.

Orange County, CA, Kickoff for the Interfaith Weekend of Service was held recently. The May 4-6 Weekend of Service is county-wide with over 30 organizations participating. URI CC S.A.R.A.H. plays a big role from start to finish.

San Francisco, CA, The Konko Church in Japantown (San Francisco) was the site of the San Francisco Interfaith Council's (SFIC) 7th Annual Interfaith...
The Future of Occupy LA?
by Rev. Leland Stewart
My insight tells me that the Occupy Movement will continue, that it will somehow overcome the obstacles it faces, and that the results of its efforts will in time begin to get the results that it seeks. [The Full Article...]

The 99% and Gratitude
by Dr. David Thompson, of The Interfaith Experience CC
We cannot go on with this wealth disparity between the very rich and the rest of the 99% of Americans. ... Government must return to 'we the people'. That is what the 99% movement is about. They don't yet know how to change society. They are at the point of diagnosis but it is my faith that they will get there because the problems they lift up for all to see are not going away. But if we cooperate, collaborate and share we will change the game to preserve the earth. This will provide jobs and hope. [The full article...]

Indigenous Visions, Prophecies and Realities of The Future
by Phil Lane of the new Protecting and Restoring the Sacred CC, Surrey, BC
Thanksgiving Day Service. The service comprised of readings, hymns/chants, prayers, blessings and reflections. An offering was received for the SFIC Interfaith Winter Shelter. [See photo, list of participants...]

San Francisco, CA, San Francisco Mayor Edwin M. Lee presenting Rita Semel with a proclamation of Rita Semel Day. The San Francisco Interfaith Council CC (SFIC) honored its founder and long-time URI leader Rita Semel at its 14th annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Prayer Breakfast on Tuesday, November 22. [See photo, more on the story...]

Santa Monica, CA has a new CC: Westside Interfaith Council For a Parliament of World's Religions. WICPW's purpose is to "be a bridge between our Parliament group in our local (Los Angeles/SoCal) community with URI and other interfaith communities; and to model interfaith co-operation supporting each others projects and initiatives. As a URI CC, we also want to participate and share ideas with other CCs and the URI global network."

Surrey, BC also has a new CC: Protecting and Restoring the Sacred, whose purpose is to "speak as one, guided by the sacred teachings and spiritual traditions of the Four Directions that uplift, guide, protect, warn, inspire and challenge the entire human family to live in ways that sustain and enhance human life and the life of all who dwell on Mother Earth, and hereby dedicate our lives and energies to healing and developing ourselves, the web of relationships that make our world, and the way we live with Mother Earth."

Washington, DC, On December 5th, SARAH President Sande Hart accepted, on behalf of S.A.R.A.H., the Women, Power and Peace Community Peace Builder Award from Peace X Peace in Washington DC. SARAH is a URI CC and Sande is on the URI in N.Am. Leadership Council. [See photo...]

And here is TIO's [Fourth Issue].

News from Other Regions
Very Respected Friends and Relatives,
As always, it is my hope and prayer that you and the many loved ones who surround you are in the very best of health and happiness.

With the heartfelt understanding that each one of us is the spiritual representative of all those beloved relatives who have gone before us, I have complete faith that, together, we will be able to build a New World Civilization. Drawing on the collective consciousness of countless previous generations, we have the divine capacity to resolve and heal all past grief, fear, hatred and broken trust, while building a just, sustainable and harmonious world that will fully realize the unlimited potential of the human family, both individually and collectively. ... Starting from within, working in a circle in a sacred manner we heal and develop ourselves, our relationships and our world. Read more...

Announcements

University of Colorado, Boulder, CO: NPA Peacebuilding, Peacelearning Conference. National Peace Academy

Africa: URI Introduced in the Republic of South Sudan, report by Mussie Hailu, Regional Director of URI for Africa. Also reported by Mussie Hailu, URI Africa has endorsed the Interfaith Declaration on Climate Change. Comments about the Declaration are wanted for the January Bulletin. Send to URI in N.Am. Bulletin Editor, Roger Eaton.

News from URI Global

World Interfaith Harmony Week, which was launched at the UN in 2011, will be observing its second year in the first week of this coming February. If your organization is planning an event near that time, you are encouraged to register it as part of this worldwide recognition of the importance of interfaith peacebuilding. As you will see on the homepage of www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com, URI as a whole has registered and is a supporter of this global movement.

URI Global Council Secretary P.K. McCary has an article about the 1000 Kalema project in the latest Interfaith Observer: Translating Kalema - Images that Speak a Thousand Words. PK and her project partner Morad from the Middle East pursued the question "What constitutes an interfaith picture?" and made some real progress by coming up with eight categories of photos, each of which in its own way makes a picture germane to
Feb 17-19, 2012. A 2-day conference dedicated to peacebuilding with a special emphasis on exploring the ecological dimensions of peace. Details.

What is the truth about Islam and Muslims in America? (Everything you always wanted to know - but were afraid to ask) Washington, DC, Jan 18th, 7:30 PM. You are Invited by Daniel Tutt of 20,000 Dialogues, a URI in N.Am. Affilite.

YLP is Showcasing Interfaith Holiday Traditions. YLP is URI's Young Leaders Program. Send your photos, videos, write-ups by January 4. Read more. Also, YLP Coordinator, Krithika Harish, herself from South Asia, reminds us that we have a long way to go right here in the U.S.: Violence against South Asians in Northern California. By addressing issues of religious and ethnic discrimination, especially the rise of Islamophobia, with the next generation, YLP hopes to work towards ending hate crimes in this area and creating peaceful communities for all.

International Women's Day (IWD), URI at the United Nations together with the URI Women's Coalition invite you to participate in an online event for IWD, March 8, 2012. In this event, URI women and men will elect separate messages to Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women. The women will elect one message and the men another. More information. To participate contact Roger Eaton.

Women of Spirit and Faith: shares her good news:

- **Women, Spirituality and Transformative Leadership: Where Grace Meets Power** is now available. Kay is one of the co-editors of this anthology of 26 diverse women's voices from across North America. Yolanda Trevino and Adelia Sandoval are two of them.
- An interview with Kay appeared in the Orange County Register, featuring her work on listening -

**URI Executive Director Charles Gibbs** has embarked on a short sabbatical. After 15 years of service three months for reflection and renewal doesn't seem too excessive! He asks our prayers. May he (and we) find that spark that makes everything new. Read his letter...

**Funding Peacebuilding**

Each month in this section, we list a few of the fund raising efforts of URI in North America Cooperation Circles and Affiliates.

**URI Principle #17:** We have the responsibility to develop financial and other resources to meet the needs of our part, and to share financial and other resources to help meet the needs of other parts.

**Interfaith Community Church in Seattle** had some bad luck earlier this year with a sewer line breaking, but the community appeal was very successful. Now there is a new need to cover the replacement of their furnace. Because of the successful earlier appeal, only $1000 is needed. Read the new Appeal.

**The Levantine Center in Los Angeles** has a wonderful fundraising campaign going to build a fantastic new complex to house the Center. Fundraisers will especially appreciate how innovative this campaign is. Please take a look!

**Marin Interfaith Council in California** has had a successful and productive year working to fulfill their mission of advocating justice, building community and celebrating all faith traditions. Their goal for individual donations in the 2011-2012 fiscal year is $23,000. You can make an online donation at www.marinifc.org.

**The Rothko Chapel in Houston Texas**, a URI in N.Am. Cooperation Circle, needs your help to remain a vibrant nexus of art, music, culture, spirituality, and dialogue.

**Unity-and-Diversity World Council in Los Angeles**, a URI N.Am. CC, is making its 47th ANNIVERSARY APPEAL. January begins the 47th year since the beginning of the Unity-and-Diversity World Council during International Cooperation Year 1965.... This coming year is a specially active time for UDC, and one in which there are some important new developments. Read the Appeal.

**URI Global Yes to Peace Campaign**'s latest feature is Women's Rights.

**URI in North America** is in search of a volunteer grant
good photo.

- On the same day, she was named an honorary canon to the Cathedral Center of St. Paul.

### New Videos

Emi Miller of URI Charlotte, NC sends us [For the Beauty of the Earth](#) as sung by Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School (Primary) choir. [Here are many more versions](#) of this affecting 19th century Christian hymn of thanksgiving.

**Meet Phil Lane.** URI in North America Individual Affiliate, as he shares his insights into sustainability and the unity of the human family with Dave Randle of the [Global Healing CC](#).

**Be a Peacemaker** supports the educational outreach efforts of Unity Productions Foundation (UPF) through its [20,000 Dialogues](#) project, a URI in N.Am. Affiliate. This project is designed to fight ignorance, and increase understanding of Muslims by showing films produced by UPF in board rooms, campuses, and churches across the country.

**A New Way to Think about Creativity** - "Eat, Pray, Love" Author Elizabeth Gilbert muses on the impossible things we expect from artists and geniuses -- and shares the radical idea that, instead of the rare person "being" a genius, all of us "have" a genius. It's a funny, personal and surprisingly moving talk.

### Advertisements

Submit your ad of 40 words or less for possible inclusion in this new section of the Bulletin. Donations welcome, but not required.

Sandy Westin has served as the Regional Coordinator of URI in North America since July 2009. As of December 31, 2011, she will be resuming her career as The Village Wordsmith, a freelance writer, editor and project manager.

writer to work with us in building our region's capacity. This might be an internship opportunity for a student, or a way to contribute life experience and expertise to help in building URI's strength throughout the US and Canada. Please contact Ardey Turner, (449) 434-8128, for more details and to explore the possibilities.

**The URI in North America Region** also [seeks your help](#).

When you buy from Amazon, please always go in through the N.Am. website. Look for the Amazon search link on the right at [urinorthamerica.org](http://urinorthamerica.org).

#### New Resources

**The URI Star** is a great way to encourage your Interfaith friends. Download the [URI Star here](#) and [reverse side of the URI Star here](#). Print and mail or, coming soon (we hope), send the star via email.

**All American Muslim** is a new TV show that is worth a look. See Jordan Elgrably's [write up](#). The 8-part series airs on Sundays at 10pm ET/PT (9pm Central) on TLC and runs through January 8, 2012.

**Reach to Peace** is by Rosalind Russell of the [R*Star Foundation](#). R*Star is a URI in N.Am. Affiliate located in Laguna Beach, CA. "The Reach to Peace book is a tool, not a literary masterpiece. It is short and attractive, already getting us attention on the area of our peace work.” Rosalind has accomplished and continues to provide great service for the women and children of Nepal. [Purchase via R*Star](#). Also not to be missed is the R*Star [Peace Flag program](#) where young North American art students make flags to be sent to Nepal. If you are an art teacher and would like to participate, you are encouraged to contact Rosalind Russell directly. (Recommended! - ed.) Also, here is the latest [RStar Foundation News](#).

GreenFaith's [Twelve Priority Measures to Save Energy](#) can start reducing your energy bills today - for congregations, schools, agencies.

**How cool is your congregation?** Take the Interfaith Power & Light [Carbon Footprint Quiz](#).

**How to Boil a Frog** now has a [Pond](#) and importantly, a freely available and excellent [Study Guide](#). Educators,
this video could set a new direction for one or another of your classes.

**Cooperation Circle Contacts:** Please forward to your email list and/or encourage your list members to subscribe directly at urinorthamerica.org/subscribe.

**Forwarded?** Subscribe yourself so as not to miss an issue. Keep up with the expanding community of URI in North America.

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Next Issue, January 18, 2012