Make History by Participating in the URI Meeting of Members!

Global Meeting of Members

January 20 & 21 and January 28 & 29

www.uri.org/mom

On January 21 & 22, and again on January 28 & 29, URI Cooperation Circles are warmly invited to join a great experiment. Can an international organization, with a membership diverse in language, culture, and of course religious beliefs, successfully interact in a global meeting – without meeting face to face?

By now you should have received in the mail an invitation and materials for the Meeting of Members (along with your CC Roster). Within this packet you will find instructions for how your CC can participate in the meeting – either by Internet, telephone or post. Please bring these materials to the attention of your CC in advance of one of the two weekends so that responses might be adequately prepared.

Through the four core areas – Bless, Shine, Chat, and Lift Your Voice – this is your opportunity to draw closer to the URI and the interfaith movement for peace and justice on Earth. Please join with the global URI community by interacting directly with another CC (perhaps a phone call discussing some of the points in the four areas?), or by sharing your thoughts via mail or through the URI website. Afterwards, you’ll be invited to share how you participated and what you learned from this virtual event.

Questions about the Meeting of Members can be directed to sfuqua@uri.org or call 612-220-0449. All details and materials can also be found on the URI web site at www.uri.org/mom.

Welcome to Two New Cooperation Circles

The URI North American Region recently grew by two CCs with the addition of the Houston Interfaith Forum (Houston, TX) and the Women’s Interfaith Circle of Service (Danville, CA). The Women’s Interfaith Circle’s purpose statement reads, "To provide a positive and respectful interfaith forum and to respect one another’s service
projects,” while the Houston Interfaith Forum’s purpose is to “serve the greater Houston Interfaith community by promoting deepened mutual understanding, harmony, and peace.” To both of you: welcome to the URI! I know that you both will enrich, and I hope be enriched by, the entire URI community with your presence.

By the way – 2005 saw the number of CCs worldwide grow by over 28%, to over 300. In North America, we have set a goal of 15 new CCs in 2006; if you are interested in forming another CC or know of a group that may be interested, please contact Stephen Fuqua, sfuqua@uri.org or 612-220-0449.

**URI Circles React to Natural Disasters**

*From the December Executive Director’s letter*  
([www.uri.org/Features/Features_Main/ed1205letter.html](http://www.uri.org/Features/Features_Main/ed1205letter.html))

“[T]here’s also been much light in the past year and URI has been part of it. For all the heartbreaking devastation, the year’s natural catastrophes also produced some of humanity’s best. The tsunami yielded countless acts of heroism and generated the largest outpouring of charitable giving in history. A URI CC, the Shanti Sena Brigade of the Sarvodaya Movement was and continues to be on the frontlines of tsunami relief in Sri Lanka and many URI members offered financial contributions to support their work.

Global Council Secretary, P.K. McCary, was central to a faith-based effort in Houston, Texas to provide relief to survivors of Hurricane Katrina. Fr. James Channan, a URI Global Council Trustee, has led an extraordinary and ongoing effort by URI’s Multiple Cooperation Circle in Pakistan to provide comfort, clothing and essential supplies to victims of the earthquake that devastated so much of Pakistan. URI members all over the world have offered financial support for this humanitarian effort.”

**URI Multi Region Website Launched**

The Multi-Regional Cooperation Circles now have their own beautiful website at [www.uriccs.org](http://www.uriccs.org), thanks to the work of Trustee and Regional Coordinator Jonathan Rose, webmaster Lance Trumbull, and other volunteers. There you can find news from the multi-regional CCs (those whose membership spans nations and continents) and descriptions of each of the Circles.

Speaking of websites – don’t forget North America’s own site at [www.uri-na.org](http://www.uri-na.org), which features periodic news postings and archives of this newsletter.

**URI NAIN Connect 2005**

I’m not sure if August feels more like yesterday or 10 years ago. I suppose it has now been a handful of months since the URI joined the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) for its annual Connect, in deliciously warm Las Vegas, NV (okay, the
heat felt good for this Texan now living in Minnesota, but admittedly was a bit intense for some participants. Thankfully the UNLV campus is well air-conditioned!)

Gard Jameson of the Southern Nevada Interfaith Council (and a NAIN board member), in an article summarizing this wonderful collaboration, writes:

“From August 12th to 16th, under clear skies and warm weather, 140 participants enjoyed a celebration of interfaith awareness on the campus of the University of Nevada. The theme of our gathering was Hospitality, Gratitude and Sharing—Interfaith in Action. ... we explored together how our interfaith communities can engage issues of Peacebuilding, Caring for Creation and Caring for Community. A large variety of creative ideas emerged as a result of the personal interactions and diverse, concurrent group processes. ...

At this conference, everyone was a participant and everyone was a leader. As administrative chair of the chair of the conference, Gard Jamieson’s only prayer is that everyone there and everyone reading this takes seriously the charge to carry the work of interfaith relations into our troubled world, with matchless goodwill, unfailing forgiveness and abounding love.”

In 2006 the URI will not be holding a regional assembly in North America. NAIN will hold its Connect gathering, in Vancouver, Canada, in June, in conjunction with the World Peace Forum. Look for more information forthcoming on the NAIN website, www.nain.org

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