



# The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship of Waynesboro

## The Enduring Legacy of the Caring Network

By Cynthia Thompson

When I became the team leader of the Caring Network, my main goal was to live up to the high standards of my original mentor, Hinda Richards, and in so doing, honor her legacy.

**Because Hinda Richards is the OG of the UUFW Caring Network!** “OG” is short for “original gangster” and a slang term appropriated from gang culture. It is now used in mainstream parlance for someone who is authentic, exceptional, and an expert. I feel this moniker is valid for Hinda because the original work she did in conceptualizing and organizing the Caring Network was so well

done that her voice still shines through in every aspect of our work.

My history with the Caring Network began some years ago when I became a Caring Networker. I was immediately impressed by Hinda’s professional and passionate leadership. I always felt supported by Hinda as a Caring Networker and as the Team Leader, and by her successor, Sylvia Woodworth. Even now, years later, she continued her support by sitting down with me to discuss the origins of the Caring Network and its importance within our beloved community.

We met at the new Starbucks in Staunton on September 20. As we settled in, she told me it was her 26<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. She and her husband, Bob, have a long history with the Fellowship. Hinda became part of the Fellowship in 1973 with her first husband and children. In 1993, she moved to Christiansburg with Bob and joined the Blacksburg UU. She moved back to the area in 2001.

It was in the early 2000’s when Rev. Ed Piper asked Hinda to help him with pastoral care support on an informal basis. A year or so later, he requested that Hinda formalize this support. She describes the work of the Team as the “nuts and bolts” of pastoral care including such tasks as visiting, providing meals and transportation, sending encouraging communications, etc. to members and committed attendees during emergencies. Over the next 13 years, Hinda continued in this role and nurtured its evolution into what it is



today. Among other things, she created the Gifts Directory which allows all members to volunteer for tasks associated with the team. For Hinda, the act of caring for each other is what church is all about.

Hinda told me that she got tremendous satisfaction out of the experience of developing the Team as well as the loyalty and commitment shown to her and the Caring Network by the Networkers and the Fellowship as a whole. She advises members to “treasure” the Networkers. She also urges members not to refuse help when it is offered. She learned that lesson years ago when she had major surgery. And it is a lesson that I learned recently when I was ill.

Thank you, Hinda, for your enduring legacy of the Caring Network. It was a work of love, and that love is still felt today.

For those of you who know Bob, Hinda’s husband and former Lutheran minister, he is happily settled at Lavender Hills Orange Campus. Although it is hard for him to be so far away from her, the pain of separation is somewhat alleviated by seeing how happy he is in the photos they send to her when she is not there and when he tells her that “you have stashed me in a good place!” Bob would enjoy getting cards sent to him at 680 University Lane #200, Orange, VA.

*If you do not know who your Caring Networker is, please contact me at [caringnetwork@uufw.org](mailto:caringnetwork@uufw.org).*

## Member News

Last Sunday, the UUFW recognized six new members in our traditional welcoming ceremony. They include new members Carla Throckmorton and Clint Nicely, and returning

members Jack and Dixie McClenahan, Theresa Curry and Tammy Kincaid.

## SONG FOR AUTUMN

In the deep fall

don't you imagine the leaves think how comfortable it will be to touch

the earth instead of the nothingness of air and the endless

freshets of wind? And don't you think the trees themselves, especially those with mossy, warm caves, begin to think

of the birds that will come—six, a dozen—to sleep

inside their bodies? And don't you hear

the goldenrod whispering goodbye,

the everlasting being crowned with the first tuffets of snow? The pond

vanishes, and the white field over which

the fox runs so quickly brings out

its blue shadows. And the wind pumps its

bellows. And at evening especially,

the piled firewood shifts a little, longing to be on its way.

—MARY OLIVER

*Jack McClenahan sent in this poem with a message for everyone feeling a sense of hopelessness and despair over the horrific circumstances in the Middle East. “Mother Nature goes about her business regardless of our human follies abroad and here. Mary Oliver has a knack for finding beauty, even as horrible news arrives daily, with her painting of words. I hope her poem gives you all a lift with a shaft of healing light that comes through these unsettled and threatening dark clouds.”*

