

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

June 2000

I am pleased to report on behalf of the Publications Committee that over the past year the committee's goals have been met. The Mighty Messenger continues to be published quarterly and The Fellowship Herald appears twice a year. The fourth issue of the Herald should be at the printer's within the next few weeks.

The work distribution in the committee continues along the lines reported on last year. Editorship of The Fellowship Herald rotates among Carolyn Kendall, Linda Buselli, Gary Deinstadt and yours truly. Sage Waitts continues to enhance the look of the Herald with her fine graphic artistry and Nancy Johnson ably lays out the Mighty Messenger at regular intervals.

Once again, the committee wishes to thank all those who have contributed material to the publications throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,
Avi Dogim, Chairman

Committee Members:
Carolyn Kendall, Secretary
Linda Buselli
Gary Deinstadt
Nancy Johnson
Sage Waitts

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Annual Report of the Charter Committee

Robert Burns

June 2000

The main activity this year for the Charter Committee was establishing that the requirements for society formation by The Urantia Book Aloha Society (TUBAS) has been satisfactorily met by fourteen founding members and TUBAS was granted society status as the 26th society of *The Urantia Book Fellowship*.

Charter Committee reviewed and recommended Lee Farmer, Michael Shengout and Shelly Upholster as Members at Large and the Executive Committee subsequently approved all.

The Charter Committee will have one opening on the committee. Larry Bowman, Secretary will not be returning after many years of faithful service. The Charter Committee is grateful to Larry for his longstanding service and we all look forward to serving with him in the future.

In our Eternal Father's service,

Robert Burns, Chair

Larry Bowman, Secretary

Robert Bruyn

Dale Sztejnberg

Bob Arkens

John Causland

Report of the International Fellowship Committee

June – 2000

At the dawn of the new millennium international interest in *The Urantia Book* grows at a fast pace. The greatest stimulus for interest has been through contact with our website. Interest has also been generated through book fairs, individual missionary efforts, and by those who live and work in the field. It is the challenge of the IFC to foster, encourage, and support these activities.

IC99 ended with a renewed interest in international activities. The IFC held a weekend retreat in Chicago during September to regroup and refocus our efforts. With so many activities occurring in so many places around the world, we felt the committee should have a more communication and coordination than a hands on function. We decided on several initiatives:

- Support focused international visits
- A book distribution program
- Timely communication and appropriate handling of inquiries
- Technical and translation support
- Each committee member would be knowledgeable regarding activities in one part of the world

These initiatives are now in various phases of implementation.

There have been several international visits during the past year. David Kantor and Augustin Arellano attended a meeting of readers in Brazil where they made presentations. Charles Olivea and Dr. Paul Premsagar attended The Delhi Book Fair during February in New Delhi, India. Christilyn Biek and Marvin Gawryl attended the World Parliament of Religions in Capetown, South Africa during December. Fellowship members worked side by side with IUA and Foundation representatives in these last two events.

Our website provides virtual access to the Fellowship, but not as many international readers are on line. Therefore, we have decided to provide key international readers with laptop computers as a portal for networking, communication, and to download educational

materials. Thus far we have presented laptops to Prince John in Ghana, Jose Manuel in Columbia, and Augustin in Mexico. I also paid a visit to Mexico recently and gave Augustin a HP laserjet printer so that study aids and secondary works can be available to readers throughout Mexico.

The remainder of this report will be devoted to our Latin American involvement. During the seven years since the publication of *Il Libro de Urantia*, the growth of the Urantia Revelation in Latin America has been dramatic. The Fellowship has supported this phenomenal growth in ways previously mentioned but too often on an uncoordinated, ad hoc, and individual basis. Our challenge at this time is to transform these individual acts of generosity into a sustained professional effort.

At the April meeting, the Executive Committee voted to dedicate the proceeds from the next fund raising drive to the current needs in our Latin American outreach. We chose the following four initiatives as the best way we can serve our Latin American readers:

- Employ a bilingual reader to coordinate Spanish and International reader services.
- Support book fair participation and book distribution
- Provide internet and technical support
- Sponsor travel-work-study scholarships

These initiatives will serve to build an infrastructure of support to serve as a model as we constructively engage other world cultures.

Latin America offers to the greatest potential for the near future growth of the Urantia Revelation. This arena of activity has generated strong grass roots support amongst our members and societies. Through our outreach activities we have developed deep and abiding relationships. Augustin applied and was accepted as a member at large during the last meeting of the executive committee. Soon we will be extending the hand of friendship and membership to many others. In essence, our Latin American friends will soon become a more close knit and integral part of our reader family. And we will be challenged to become a fully bilingual and bicultural organization. It seems that on the road to internationalization, our first major step is to become The Urantia Book Fellowship of the Americas.

Respectfully submitted,

John Lange, Chair

For the committee,

Lila Dogim

Douglas Fraser

Susan Ransbottom

Stephanie Shafer

Adrienne Jarnagin

Annual Report on Website Activities
Prepared for the General Council

June 2000

By the end of June, 2000, the Fellowship website will have served out over 1,000,000 page views since the start of the new millennium. We are currently serving out between 6,000 and 8,000 page views every 24 hours from an archive of over 5,000 documents.

This represents well over 50,000 individual accesses to the website in a month, more than half of which are for documents in Spanish. Even cutting these numbers in half to account for individuals who stumble onto a web page while searching for something else and then leave, we are still left with a substantial number of individuals discovering The Urantia Book and using related resources.

Our third most popular language group is Portuguese, consistent with the general high level of interest in Latin America. As there is currently no complete translation, we are publishing reader translations of individual papers. This is stimulating the development of regional social infrastructure. In Brazil a network of over 50 interested readers has formed over the past year as a result of contacts made through the website and interest generated by translated papers. It is my hope that this type of activity will be repeated in other language groups as well.

Dennis Shields and Sonny Schnieder have been working to create web-compatible audio files out of the Malibu series of Bill Sadler recordings. Digital noise reduction technology is making possible the reclamation of much clear reproduction than was possible even with the original tapes. This is a tedious and ongoing process. Additional recordings should be made available later this year including excerpts from the 95 hours of the Oklahoma series.

We continue to build our history archive. Recent additions have included correspondence related to the first French translation as well as correspondence with Sir Hubert Wilkins, a noted Arctic explorer who was a member of AThe Seventy. @

The website is currently providing email list services for nine different special interest groups and has begun to provide web hosting services for selected readership groups such as the Retreat Network (<http://retreatnetwork.org>)

The website is the result of integrating the work of several informal sub-groups consisting of the following individuals:

1. Programming and technical support group: Morgan Rauh, Larry Watkins, Mark Turrin,

David Kantor

2. Domestic inquiry response group: Gary Deinstadt and New York Society members, Larry Watkins, Marty Greenhut, Paula Thompson, Francyl Gawry, Ann Garner, Beth Bartley, Meredith Sprunger
3. International inquiry response group: Susan Ransbottom, Rosey Lieske, Agustin Arellano (Mexico and Central America), Juan Paulo Vega (Chile and other Latin American countries), Ana Maria Nascimento Roberto (Brazil), Olga Lopez (Spain), Ken Glasziou (Australia). Several of these individuals have their own sub-groups which provide further assistance with responses and follow-up.
4. Document preparation group: David Kantor, Julianne Clerget, Richard Johnson, Larry Watkins, Ken Glasziou, Richard Omura
5. Administration group: David Kantor, Susan Ransbottom, Mario Caiole, Richard Omura, Ana Maria Nascimento Roberto, Angel Sanchez-Escobar, Ken Glasziou, Joy Brandt
6. Copyright and Trademark oversight: Dan Massey
7. Other support: Marvin Gawry, Sara Blackstock, Sondra Seeger, Christel Garrick, Robert Reno, Anibal Pacheco, Dennis Shields, Sonny Schneider, Bud Kagan, Duane Faw, Saskia Raevouri, Les Jamieson, Lee Smith

(I should also thank my colleagues on the Executive Committee who have spent a great deal of administrative time this past year addressing the many complaints received from Urantia Foundation regarding our Internet activities. I would also like to thank John Hales, who manages the additional accounting tasks created by this undertaking.)

But even with all these individuals involved, there is still a need for additional volunteers. The most critical area of need at present is for someone willing to put in several hours a week helping with administrative tasks.

This past year a server was installed at the Chicago office along with 100 mb Ethernet service. This is currently being used to create a backup system so that website and email services will continue uninterrupted should there be technical difficulties with the California installation. This system also can provide a foundation upon which administrative work can be distributed and processed at locations other than the Chicago office as well as over an office network. Administrative use of this resource has yet to be

mobilized but much of the infrastructure is in place and operational. This past year we switched from T1 service to DSL service in both California and Illinois nodes and realized a significant cost savings in the process.

In the works:

A great deal of thought and effort has gone into the presentation of website materials in a manner which will minimize the amount of time we have to spend responding to complaints from Urantia Foundation about copyright and trademark violations. At present, all of the translated materials which have been created independently of Urantia Foundation efforts are being migrated into the new Planet Urantia webspace where users must register and acknowledge copyright issues in order to access the resources. It is important to appreciate that the Internet publication of these materials has stimulated the development of new regional readership groups, so there is more going on here than the simple act of publishing documents. The Planet Urantia software provides services for private groups as well. In this mode, when a user logs on to the system, only those services for which he or she is registered will appear as options on that person=s screen display. If you have need for such services, please contact me.

More communication services are being planned for the website, particularly in the area of providing support for Special Interest Groups. Internet technology is continually changing and over the next year there will be a significant upgrading of our formatting technologies in order to accommodate a new generation of wireless Internet display devices. More audio files will be published. Several new Latin American websites will be coming online in the next few months and we are working to develop a cooperative network and to minimize the duplication of effort. Bill and Kaye Cooper have contributed a complete set of back issues of their newsletter, AThe Circles,@ which will be scanned and published in the newsletter archive. (While we=ve been able to collect a significant number of old copies of the AAgondonter@ it would be nice if the Los Angeles Society could undertake the digitizing of these documents and make them available to our history archive or publish them on their website -- it would be a significant contribution to the documentation of readership history.)

There is a threefold purpose to the website:

- 1.) To make it as easy as possible for people to discover and explore The Urantia Book and to make contact with near-by readers.
- 2.) To provide services to readers; to encourage study and provide tools with which these readers can engage in their own efforts to propagate the revelation and spread the gospel

of the kingdom.

3.) To provide administrative services for the Fellowship and its Societies.

Respectfully submitted,

David Kantor

Annual Report of the President
To the TDA, General Council, and Membership of
The Urantia Book Fellowship
July, 2000
Janet Farrington Graham

This will be my final annual report as president of The Fellowship. Although there are many exciting projects in progress, I will leave it to the next president to share the good news with you. There are a few times when it is appropriate for a president to share personal feelings about the state of the "union", and I hope this is one of them. The statements below represent my opinions, not necessarily those of the people with whom I have served. However, I feel a responsibility to share the insights gained during my three years as Fellowship president.

I believe the revelation community is at a crossroads. Our major organizations are facing the choice of reform or failure, a choice brought about by the natural evolution of a human system that has exhausted the potential of its infancy. Fifty years ago a small group of dedicated religionists labored to bring forth an epochal revelation, and they designed an organizational system to facilitate the emergence of a new social/religious movement. This may have been the best possible system for its time, but throughout most of a fifty-year history, the organizations comprising this system have been mired in power struggles and political strife. There have been lawsuits and rumors of lawsuits. Millions of dollars of valuable capital and countless hours have been invested in maintaining or challenging the status quo. Relationships have been damaged and volunteers have become discouraged. Long-time readers are frustrated over the state of the movement, and new readers are dismayed. "How did a spiritual community dedicated to an epochal revelation find itself in such a mess?"

Individual believers, feeling the need for independent action, have initiated projects designed to transcend the influence of unresolved conflict among the leadership, and perhaps this is the next evolutionary step: a network of private foundations dedicated to specific projects, a grassroots seeding of revelation services independent of any umbrella organization. While this alternative may be acceptable, I believe we must also examine, carefully examine, what has transpired during the past fifty years and make a reasonable effort to design an organizational structure that can serve the community during the next hundred years.

I often wonder what our spiritual supervisors think about the state of the Urantia movement, and I long for the advice of the Resident Governor General. Are these power struggles necessary? Can we invest our talents more wisely? Have we overlooked the

forest for the trees? Imagine, for a moment the elevated perspective of the spiritual administration on Urantia. These experienced celestial personalities are able to see the unfolding of trends far into the future. They know, for example, how electronic communication will change the legal status of intellectual properties and change the lives of human beings previously isolated; they recognize the potential inherent in the paradigm shifts brought about by advancing technology. In fact, I believe they anticipated this shift and provided our community fifty years to adjust to the shock of epochal revelation, and to prepare for the future.

Are we prepared? I think the escalation of conflict, the struggle for control of the book, is evidence that we are not prepared. Further, I believe that if we continue down this road our organizations will eventually become obsolete, and may unwittingly institutionalize a religion ABOUT the book.

There are no ready solutions. In our best moments, we dream of a unified community, free of the struggle for control of the text, sharing the fruits of the spirit with a struggling world. In our most insightful moments, we envision an active partnership with the planetary government, providing administrative support in preparation for the next spiritual age. In our most private moments, each one of us sincerely seeks greater service to our Creator Son, and to the Supreme.

There is no doubt in my mind that our community is hungry for brotherhood. Although we know that social brotherhood is an evolution born of struggle, spiritual brotherhood can be attained now. "Always we may have diversity of intellectual comprehension and interpretation, even varying degrees of socialization, but lack of spiritual brotherhood is both inexcusable and reprehensible." (170:5.20)

Perhaps it would help to shift our focus from secular ends to spiritual means. Conflict is inevitable, the result of diverse human minds and committed wills; conflict illuminates the potential for personal growth. Resolution is creative, the result of spiritualized minds discovering the Father's will; resolution indicates the realization of spiritual growth. "Mutual understanding and fraternal love are transcendent civilizers and mighty factors in the world-wide realization of the brotherhood of man." (52:6.2-7)

And perhaps it would be helpful to shift our focus to a universe perspective. "Urantia is the sentimental shrine of all Nebadon, the chief of ten million inhabited worlds, the mortal home of Christ Michael, sovereign of all Nebadon, a Melchizedek minister to the realms, a system savior, an Adamic progressor, a Son of Man in the likeness of mortal flesh, and the Planetary Prince of Urantia. And your record tells the truth when it says that this same Jesus has promised some time to return to the world of his terminal bestowal, the World of the Cross." (119:8.8)

The eyes of the universe are upon us. The planetary government is dedicated to our

success. We have angels working by our side. What we need is the courage to resolve our inevitable conflicts, to reform our outdated organizations, to revitalize our spiritual community.

I retire from organizational service for a time, to more fully embrace a community perspective and to explore the potentials for revelation service. I am grateful for these three years as Fellowship president, and my nine years as a General Councilor. And I have faith that the next President and General Council will serve the membership to the very best of their abilities.

My prayers go with you all.

Submitted by Janet Farrington Graham

A Service of
The Urantia Book Fellowship

The Education Committee Report Summer 2000

This past year, the Education Committee has been occupied with the organization of the Summer Study Session "Science, Ethics, and Religion" in Elmhurst, Illinois.

A cooperative effort between the Education Committee and the Domestic Extension Committee produced a set of materials that we call the Study Group Starter Kit. Included in this package is a series of topical studies suitable for new readers, plus information about how to start and nurture a local study group.

The Wrightwood on Race, chaired by Bobbie Dreier, is now in it's second printing. The Wrightwood on The Deity Adventure, chaired by Alison Gardner, is still in pre-publication. The panelists for the planned Wrightwood on Parables, chaired by Stephen Zendt, have been seated. Potential panelists for a future Wrightwood on Family have been identified.

Our plans for a speaker's bureau have been put on hold. Long range plans for developing a teachers track at summer conferences are being developed.

On behalf of the Education Committee, I thank the General Council for the opportunity to be of service to the revelation.

Very Truly Yours,

Michelle Klimesh, Chair
Alison Gardner
David Holt
Charles Olivea
Nick Stefero
Stephen Zendt

Fraternal Relations Committee

Annual Report 2000

The primary activity of the committee in the past year involved our participation in the 1999 World Parliament of Religions (see report below), which was an outstanding opportunity for all who attended to fellowship and share the revelation with our sisters and brothers of different faiths.

Also, thanks to the persistent contributions of Beth Bartley and Richard Omura (our committee web liaison) , we have established an FRC webpage at <http://urantiabook.org/fef/frc> with a section on rites and rituals, pictures and reports on the Parliament, and a chat space for interfaith discussion. Recent discussion has focused on posting materials on how readers new to interfaith involvement can get started. Thank you Beth and Richard!

Our participation in the North American Interfaith Network continues. I will be attending the annual conference at the end of July in Fullerton. If anyone is interested in participating let me know and I'll forward registration information.

Respectfully submitted,

Marvin Gawrynn, Chairman

Fraternal Relations Committee

Urantia Book Readers Share the Revelation at the *Parliament of the World's Religions*

In Capetown, South Africa

The readers I knew who attended the second Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1993, without exception, said it was one of the most powerful spiritual experiences of their entire lives. So, as I departed the U.S. for the third Parliament, I was prepared for something special. But it far surpassed my expectations. Up until these eight days in Capetown (Dec. 1-8, 1999), I knew with my mind that all the people of Urantia were my sisters and brothers. But in Capetown I was immersed in the living truth of God's diverse family on this remarkable planet

The depth of the conversations with Parliament participants was breathtaking. They moved almost immediately to how we each experienced the inner encounter with God, how the paths were many and the Truth one, how we all were sisters and brothers in one family, beloved children of God, at home in a universe filled with undreamed of opportunities for service and growth.

The Fellowship's booth attracted a steady flow of visitors. We also offered a panel

presentation, featuring members of both the IUA and Fellowship, which was quite effective. Over the 8 days we gave away all of the Fellowship's eighty books to people who wanted first to read it themselves, and then agreed to place their copies in public or organizational libraries.

I was amazed at how people immediately recognized the unusual nature of the book. The record for brevity probably goes to the leader of the Muslim Youth Education Association. Dressed elegantly all in white except for his black turban, accompanied by one of his wives wrapped in flowing black silk from head to toe except for her expressive eyes, he looked intently for a full minute at the front cover with its pictures of Jesus, an angel, and the earth floating in space. Flipping it over, he read the back cover, opened the book, read briefly, shut the book and said, "I want this. How much is it?" I explained the library placement program's free book offer. He looked me full in the eyes, smiled broadly, filled out the form, and left holding the book tightly with both hands.

One day I left the booth for a while, with one of the books opened to Jesus' "Discourse on True Religion", which had proven to be good "bait" with other passers by. When Mike McIsaac came by an hour later he found two young men, security guards, scribbling furiously, trying to copy the entire section into their notebooks. They said they had never seen such a book, and asked "How can we get one?" Ten minutes later they left with faces shining, each with a book. The next day one of them came back saying, "Did you realize this is an incredible revelation?" We all laughed and embraced.

Halfway through the Parliament, a woman, who had received a book on the first day, came back to the booth with profuse thanks. She said she had not been able to put the book down for three days.

And then there was the young girl from Capetown, a student at an all girls highschool, who sat quietly at the back of the booth reading some suggested sections for two hours while I chatted with others. She was so sweet, asking, "How long can I read this book before I place it in my school's library." "Of course, as long as you wish," I replied. She was beaming as she walked away, book in hand.

One woman explained how her husband, a wealthy aquatic engineer living in Spain, had had a remarkable revelation of Jesus, "the Master". He subsequently wrote several books, and together they had started a worldwide ministry. After looking at several sections in the Urantia Book, the last being the passage where Jesus and Ganid ministered to two ladies of the night in Corinth, she pulled her husband over and read him the section out loud, both with tears in their eyes. When she finished, they looked at each other with amazement. They left a little later, both expressing great excitement at the prospect of reading the entire book and sharing it with others in their travels.

The leader from the Cao Dai sect in Vietnam was most appreciative of the gift of the book for their main library. Their founder was a great teacher who received a powerful revelation in the 1920's, centered on all people being children of God in the heavenly Father's universal family, while all religions were paths to the one truth. Their group was expanding rapidly in

many parts of the world, with more than six million adherents.

We had an outstanding exchange with the Executive Director of the Legion of Good Will, the leading spiritual and social ministry organization in Brazil. They minister to more than 3 million people annually, and are working closely with the top leaders of the Brazilian government on many projects, including introducing a multi-faith spiritual curriculum to all of the public schools in Brazil. He was fascinated with the Urantia Book, and took two copies back to place in the main libraries in Brasilia.

Each of us at the Parliament had so many of these rewarding encounters. Steve Rohrbach was able to get a copy of the book to Nelson Mandela, and Gard Jameson was able to give one to the Dalai Lama.

My favorite response to the book came from an envoy sent by the Scottish parliament to invite the Dalai Lama to address that body. After reading several sections, this cheery fellow exclaimed in a thick Scottish accent, "I thought the Course in Miracles was a doorstopper! But this really takes the biscuit!"

Here is one last story. One day I had an extensive conversation with a young woman from Johannesburg, an enlistee in the South African armed forces, who was overjoyed at being able to receive a copy of the book. Later that day I was talking with another woman, who introduced herself as the first woman's sister. She said she could not believe their good fortune at having a copy of the book. She had been by the booth the day before, and wanted so much to read through the book's descriptions of the afterlife. But she was convinced she could never afford the price of such a fine volume, and so she left without ever inquiring. Her eyes brimmed with tears as she told of how her sister burst into their room to share the news that they both could now learn the truth from this great revelation.

Our attendance at the third Parliament of the World's Religions was successful in so many ways. The next such gathering is planned for 2005. Hopefully many more readers can attend, and so enjoy a remarkable opportunity to share truth and love with thousands of sincere religionists from around the world.