

STUDY GROUP HERALD

Summer 1996



All Roads Lead to IC '96

"Living Faith"



Contents

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Spring 1996

Special IC '96 Issue

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Flagstaff, Arizona

See inside for registration form
or call The Fellowship
at (312) 327-0424
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The Fellowship Study Group Herald

Executive Editor
Associate Editor
Managing Editor
Staff Writers

Barry Bradley
Melissa Wells
Carol Hay
Carolyn Kendall
Michael Gillespie
Matthew Block

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- 3 Letters to the Fellowship
- 3 General Council Meets

Cover Story

- 4 Get Ready for IC '96

By Michael Gillespie, Robin Robinson &
Melissa Wells

A Look at What to Expect at Flagstaff

- 7 Dateline

- 8 Little Urantial

By Michael Gillespie

*Talking on the Internet with Urantia
Book Readers Around the World*

IC '96 Preview

- 11 The Science of Fatherhood

By Claire Thurston

A Preview of an IC '96 Workshop

- 14 Graduation of Ruth Renn

By Carolyn Kendall

- 15 Calendar of Events

Letters To The Fellowship

It is saddening to see so many people who are not interested in *The Urantia Book*. After five attempts to give the book away, only the one whom I considered not really deserving of it accepted it.

*Norman P. Owen
St. Petersburg, FL*

Getting the message of *The Urantia Book* out to as many people as possible, in a tactful way, is the responsibility of all who value, love and cherish this book.

*Light Connections Ministries
Santa Clara, CA*

I would like to contact and network with others who are in the vanguard of the outworking of the revelation, who want to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom first and foremost, whose lives have been transformed by the Spirit, and who have become infused by the personally spiritualized teachings in *The Urantia Book*.

*Peter B. Holley
General Delivery
Syria, VA 22742*

One might think, of all the movements on Urantia, ours would be the most unified. Not so. The divide has roots that go back years, but it is not justification for our disunity. Wherever one's opinion lies, it is imperative that we reconcile and present a unified (but not unanimous) front to the world. Who made mistakes is not important. What happens with this precious revelation is of paramount importance.

*Richard Warren
Fort Worth, TX*



General Council Meets in San Francisco

The mid-winter meeting of the General Council in San Francisco, February 2nd and 3rd, offered a chance to fine-tune details of the new soft-cover publication of *The Urantia Book*. In addition, the Council approved the establishment of a subsidiary of the Fellowship, Uversa Press, to oversee details of the publishing business. The issue of ongoing discounts was also discussed, and it was agreed that some form of volume discounts will be offered to everyone, details of which will be set later.

Society Representation on the General Council

In other business, Fellowship societies are close to having the option to elect individuals from their group directly to the General Council. At present, societies, through their delegates at the Triennial Delegate Assembly, elect all 36

Council members. Councilors are elected in groups of twelve at each of three successive assemblies. A delegate may be elected to the Council if voted upon by the other delegates.

The Council has often not been viewed as a representative body, and this new proposal addresses the issue of representation. In response to a 1991 TDA resolution, the Judicial Committee undertook the task of developing enabling procedures for approval by the General Council.

In February the Council voted to give each Fellowship society the right to elect one member directly to the General Council. This could expand the Council to 54 members if all societies participate. A group of constitutional amendments and bylaw changes will be necessary to bring the constitution into conformance with this proposed procedure. Societies must first approve the steps taken by the General Council to that point. Societies are being surveyed by the Judicial

Continued on page 10

Get Ready for IC '96

"... the faith of spirt-born man confers the assurance of living fellowship with the eternal God."

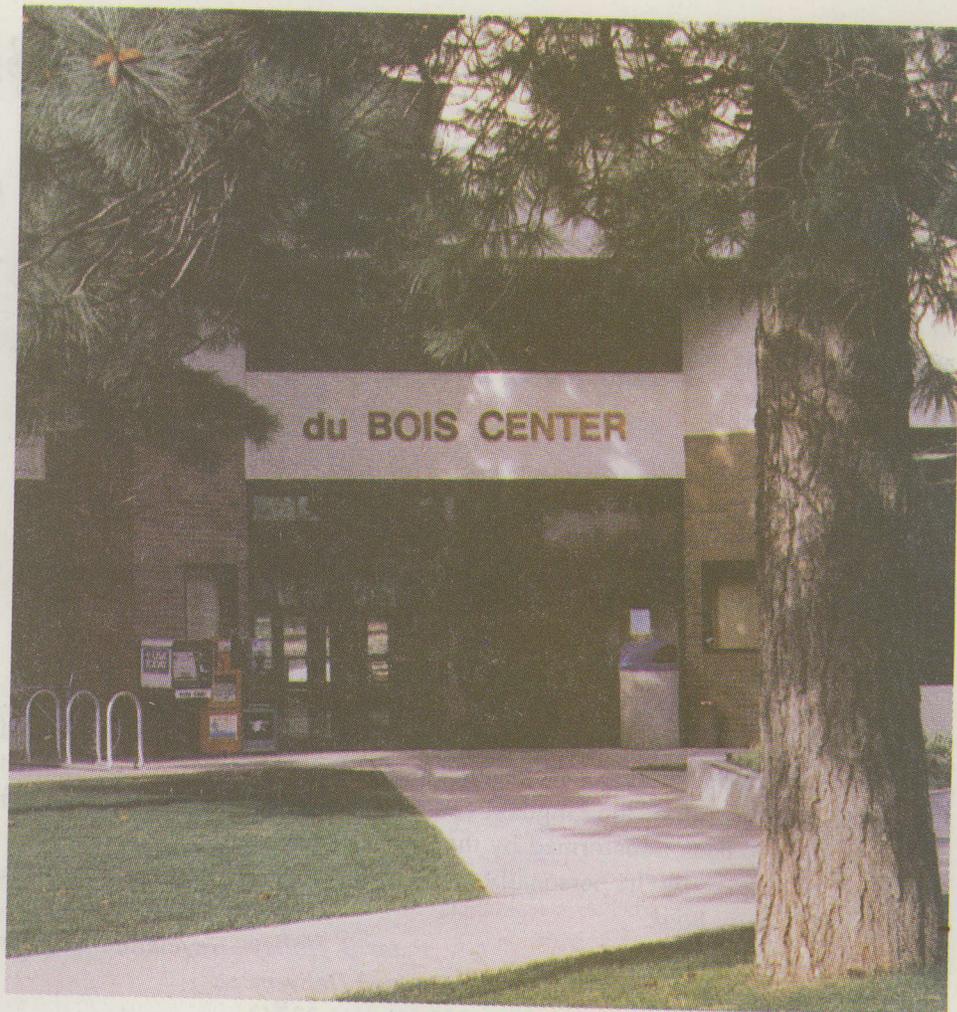
The Urantia Book
page 1931

By Michael Gillespie,
Robin Robinson & Melissa Wells

A buzz of activity is underway as the Urantia reader community prepares to explore the many dimensions of "Living Faith" at the 1996 International Conference, August 3rd through 8th at the Northern Arizona University campus in Flagstaff, Arizona.

Conference chairman Janet Farrington, vice president of the Fellowship, has led a host of volunteers for the past three years to create a setting of spiritual and intellectual stimulation as well as involvement for each member of the family, no matter what age or level of interest in *The Urantia Book*. All the favorite aspects of previous international conferences have been arranged, as well as some new experiences for conference goers.

Best of all, IC '96 has been priced so that families can more easily arrange to



The du Bois Center on the scenic campus of Northern Arizona University will be the site of several sessions at IC '96.

take advantage of this special opportunity to meet or remeet friends of the Urantia community from all corners of the world.

"We have done our best to plan a brief and beautiful encounter," says Farrington, "to experience living faith in loving action."

We hope that you will join us at Flagstaff this summer. What follows is a broad-brush view of events that have been arranged for your education, entertainment and edification.

Keynote Speakers

Plenary speakers include a bevy of proven communicators on a wide range of subjects. Dan Massey will be the keynote speaker for the program on Sunday, August 4th, which will focus on the

Cosmic Family. Massey, who lives in the Washington, D.C. area and is chairman of the Fellowship's Education Committee, has been a featured speaker at the three Scientific Symposia and the recent Summer Seminars.

Earlene Green, also from the Washington, D.C. area and a reader of *The Urantia Book* for nearly 20 years, will speak on Monday, August 5th, about the Global Family. Her presentation is entitled "We're All Connected." This will be an inspirational sharing focusing on diversity and what unites people. "We're each a part of God's flower garden," Green says. "I'll explore our responsibilities to each other and our planet."

No plenary session is planned for Tuesday, August 6th, since that day has been dedicated to recreation and scenic tours of the northern Arizona area, rich

in the tradition of Native Americans.

Wednesday, August 7th, Geri Johnson will speak on the Human Family. Johnson resides in Saudi Arabia with her husband and two sons, and this family helped form the Grand Canyon Society while residing in Phoenix.

On Thursday, August 8th, Mo Siegel, chairman of the Domestic Extension Committee, will speak on the Faith Family.

Morning Study

Concurrent morning sessions will further explore the themes developed by the plenary speaker of the day.

As a sampling of offerings at IC'96, topics and presenters include: "Foundations of Faith: The Spiritual Dimension of Fathering" by Claire Thurston; "Harmonizing the Global Family" by David Glass; "A Cosmology of Race" by Kermit Anderson, Matthew Block, David Kantor, and Charles Olivea; "What I've Always Been But Never Really Knew" by Marta Elders; "Global Family — The Way Forward" by Will Wentworth.

The list goes on. These lectures, discussion groups, and panel sessions are the culmination of years of research, in some cases, and professional expertise. They will provide an excellent opportunity to dialogue on issues among readers with a worldwide range of knowledge and experience.

"My lecture on faith will indicate its origin, importance, function, and use, also its incredible results and rewards," says Father Robert Schuer at St. Agatha Church in Columbus, Ohio, whose session is entitled "Faith — Seeing the Invisible, Knowing the Unknowable." "After physical and spiritual life itself, faith is the most valuable of all gifts from God. It truly makes family fellowship with God the Father and with all other human beings possible."

Afternoon Studies

The goal of the afternoon is to present a balanced set of opportunities.

Study Group Herald

There will be more discussion groups, emphasizing the theme of the morning lecture program, as well as a variety of indoor or outdoor family activities.

"Thus far there are over 30 committed presenters for talks and discussion groups," says Lee Smith, discussion coordinator. Topics include "Experiencing Sonship with God," "Be Still and Know That I Am God' — Unifying Meditation Techniques," "Jesus' Teaching about the Kingdom," "The Rights of the Child and the United Nations Convention," "Journey into Wholeness: Understanding Relationships," "Faith: Our Spiritual Receptivity," "The Psychology of Living Faith," and "21 Steps to a Spiritual Awakening."

"So, 'whosoever will may come,'" Smith says. "We encourage your attendance, your involvement, and the sharing of your Living Faith."

Family Activities

The IC'96 program includes family activities for kids of all ages. Both indoor and outdoor activities are planned to balance the traditional emphasis on more intellectual pursuits. Outdoors,

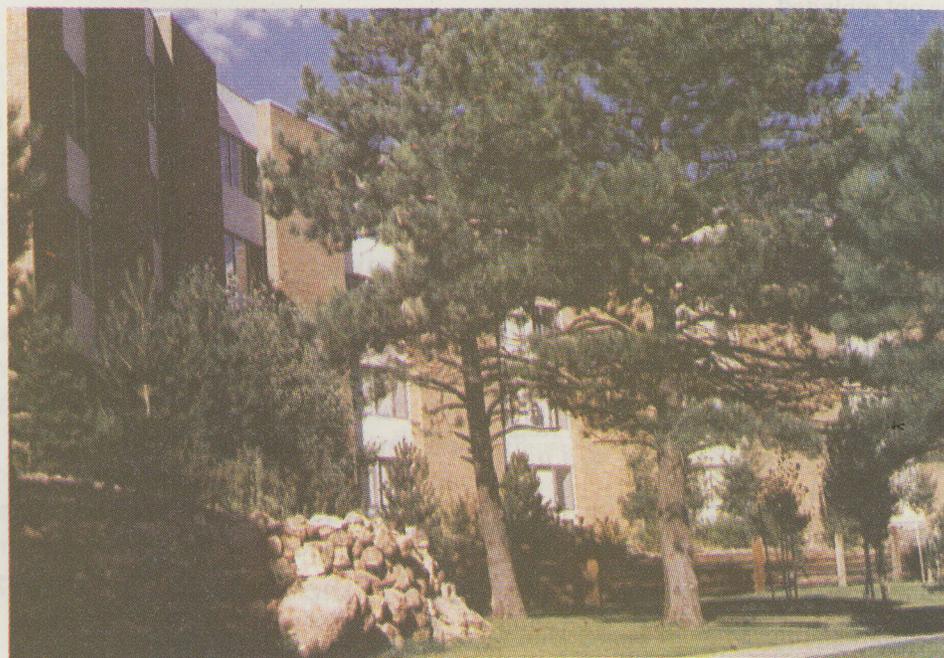
there will be group sports, including softball and volleyball, with matches set for the categories of adults, teens, and children. Non-competitive games will be featured, too. Indoors, there will be music, poetry, group dancing, yoga, puppets, and various crafts.

"We're making sure that there are plenty of family activities," says Tony Finstad, activities organizer, "fun for all the kids — even the middle-aged and older ones."

Finstad is looking for additional volunteers. Give him a call at (206) 402-4315 if you would like to help.

Worship

Each plenary session at IC'96 will begin with a time of worship, providing a flavor of approach to God by spiritual leaders from around the world. Sunday morning's program will begin with worship in the tradition of Native Americans. Wednesday's worship will be led by Sister Jayanti of the Brahma Kumari. An hour of worship in the evenings has also been arranged by Gard Jameson, chairman of the Fraternal Relations Committee.



McConnell Hall is one of the dormitories that will be used to house conference attendees.

Club UB

In the evenings, the Coffeehouse, open from 9 p.m. until 10 p.m. and serving, of course, coffee, as well as beer and wine, will accommodate the discussions that are just too good to end with the afternoon. Then at 10 p.m. we'll shift into Club UB featuring the ever-popular live entertainment of talented individuals within the Urantia community.

Another evening will be devoted to jazz. Violinist Cristina Seaborn and singer-songwriter Barbara Hester will be on hand to entertain, and there will be a professional band to back up guest musicians. Magician Shawn Greer will present mystifying feats of legerdemain.

If you would like to perform at Club UB, call organizer Gary Deinstadt at (914) 276-1026.

Day Trips

On Tuesday, the schedule will change to include daylong tours to a variety of scenic, historical, and archeological sites in the area. Tour packages have been arranged and prices (adults/children 5-15) include all park entrance and national monument fees, but lunch is not included.

The Grand Canyon sightseeing tour (\$37/\$18.50) will visit the Navajo Reservation, Trading Post, and Coconino National Forest as well as the Grand Canyon. The tour will also visit Grand Canyon Village, Bright Angel Lodge, and several scenic vantage points.

The Oak Creek Canyon/Montezuma's Castle tour (\$32/\$16) will visit many of Oak Creek's natural wonders, including Bell Rock, the Chapel of the Holy Cross, and Cathedral Rock, a turreted sandstone butte at Red Rock Crossing. Montezuma's Castle is a late-stage dwelling of the Sinagua Indians that was erroneously named for the famous Indian chief.

The Petrified Forest/Painted Desert tour (\$54/\$27) will visit the fossilized, rainbow-colored, 150 million-year-old silica forest discovered by the Anasazi



In addition to the conference sessions, there will be plenty of outdoor activities and tours of such exotic attractions as the Grand Canyon, the Painted Desert and the Petrified Forest.

Indians, the meteor crater where NASA astronauts trained for their moon landings, and the Indian ruins on the Puerco River. The Petrified Forest has more than 300 ancient (pre-1400 A.D.) Indian ruins and other sites.

A fourth tour, by boat from Lake Powell to the Grand Canyon (\$80/\$70), will take conference goers from Lake Powell to Lees' Ferry. The 15-mile trip begins at the Glen Canyon Dam and travels southwest through Glen Canyon toward the Grand Canyon. Appropriate clothing and sun protection are recommended.

"It's very important to make reservations ahead of time for all tours. Only a few last-minute reservations will be accepted at the conference site," says day trip coordinator Eve McMahon. "Don't be left out of an exciting outdoor experience." For additional information, call McMahon at (602) 788-1750.

Fun at the Country Fair

The final event of IC'96 is a 1940s-style country fair, which will be held in the Bowl at the campus.

campus. The grassy area, surrounded by 100-year-old pines, will be turned into a fairgrounds.

Coordinator Jennifer Siegel, who resides in Boulder, Colorado, envisions *Urantia Book* readers strolling past tents, enjoying musical entertainment, hawkers and treats like popcorn and cotton candy.

"We wanted to recreate the feeling of festive community they had in the good old days," Siegel says. "The Bowl is the perfect location for a fair. It even has a gazebo in the center."

Siegel plans to add park benches for folks to sit and enjoy fair events along with the panoramic view of the mountains beyond the pines.

Plans for events and entertainment are still shaping up. Siegel is asking for suggestions and assistance from any readers with experience organizing carnival rides, watermelon contests, three-legged races and entertainment. She'll also need help setting up the site on Thursday, August 8th.

For those who are interested in this opportunity for service, Siegel may be contacted at (303) 447-0212, preferably Monday through Friday between 9:30 and 11 a.m. (Rocky Mountain time).

Dateline

First Orders Received for Fellowship's *Urantia Book*

Since early January readers have responded to the announcement of the publication of *The Urantia Book* by the Fellowship by placing 5,500 orders — more than 1,000 books by individuals and 4,500 copies by large-quantity purchasers. Published by Uversa Press, this book features a two-column format and incorporates a reference system to locate passages of the text by citing paper, section and paragraph. Notation is also provided to allow easy cross reference to the pagination of the 1955 public domain printing of *The Urantia Book*.

The book will be soft covered, 6-1/2 inches by 9-1/4 inches, containing approximately 1,900 pages. Two different cover designs will be produced. One cover is intended to appeal to bookstore browsers, with images of an angel, the planet Earth, and Jesus. The second is more conservative, with text only on the cover.

This edition reproduces the 1955 public domain text of *The Urantia Book*, except for the correction of spelling and typographic errors. These corrections are documented in a separate pamphlet, which is available from the Fellowship on request.

Special Projects Puts Fellowship on the Internet

The Fellowship now has an Internet site at <http://www.ubfellowship.org>. The purposes of this site are to present *The Urantia Book* to interested persons who may be searching the Internet and to develop a central location for reader services and resources, such as libraries, archives, and news related to conferences, societies and study groups. Currently the site contains a news page of IC '96. News related to the conference, as well as conference schedules and events, will be posted as they are received.

Other plans for the site include the publication of web pages for societies and study groups as they develop the

ability to prepare and maintain electronic documents. An electronic response form is provided at the site so that questions and comments can be sent to a central location and then distributed via E-mail to individuals who can personally respond. This effort is being managed by Larry Watkins in Sacramento, lwatkins@bidnet.com.

More information on this site will be provided at IC '96, where a computer lab will demonstrate many of the communications potentials of this rapidly growing medium.

For more information, contact Special Projects chairman David Kantor at dkantor@ubfellowship.org.

Gender Series Now Available

A series of presentations made at the third Wrightwood Seminar on Gender and *The Urantia Book* is now available from the Fellowship. This publication explores one of the most provocative issues of our time — the meaning of gender differences.

A small group of students shared their differing points of view in May 1993 on this intriguing subject. The five essays are the fruit of over two years of reflective, comparative review and revision. The result is a 95-page comb-bound book (*see page 15 for order form*) that promises not to disappoint. Here, in brief, is what the authors say about their articles.

"Historical, Contemporary and Potential Roles for Women" by Alison Gardner. *The Urantia Book* is a pro-feminist document, Gardner says. Special treatment of women and chivalry are traditions the book supports. "Jesus' gospel incorporates the greatest redefinition of a woman's rights, roles and responsibilities ever made, before or since," she says. In her paper, Gardner shows that there is a spiritual and social quest to grant women importance and value in the planetary culture of the future.

"Spheres and Rights: A Study of *The Urantia Book* on Gender Differences" by Byron Belitsos. This paper explores the book's disclosure that gender differences are an essential, irrefutable, and deeply meaningful feature of human life. Belitsos seeks to untangle gender mysteries and paradoxes in evolutionary thought. Key is that gender differentiation and complementarity reveal a creator design of spheres of existence which are

Continued on page 9

Little UrantiaL

This Internet Post of *Urantia Book* Readers Is Probably Not What You Thought It Would Be, But More

By Michael Gillespie

Little UrantiaL is an Internet forum for those who study the *Urantia Papers*. It exists in cyberspace, in the vast network of computers that are the Internet. It is an offspring of the creation of Michael Million, who founded the first UrantiaL list some four years ago.

Wide-ranging and freewheeling discussion characterizes Little UrantiaL, also referred to as U2. The topics of discussion all relate, in one way or another, to the study of the *Urantia Papers*. Among the 200 or more subscribers to the list is Claudia Ayers of Sacramento, California. "The list gives me an ongoing, day-to-day relationship with people from all walks of life who share with me a love for the teachings of our great book," she says. "Everyone who wants to contribute may. The mail is sometimes too heavy, so practice in using the delete key is helpful. I have made new friends and I am looking forward to Flagstaff with greater enthusiasm because I know I will get to meet 30 or 40 people in person who I already know to some degree in cyberspace. One of the greatest thrills is seeing the occasional posts of international readers."

One such reader is Thieu Klijn of Eindhoven, Holland. "I had been reading *The Urantia Book* for about 18 years when I got a computer and a modem," he says. "To test its usefulness, I fed the word 'Urantia' into the search engines of the Internet and it came up with a lot of surprising material, including this list.

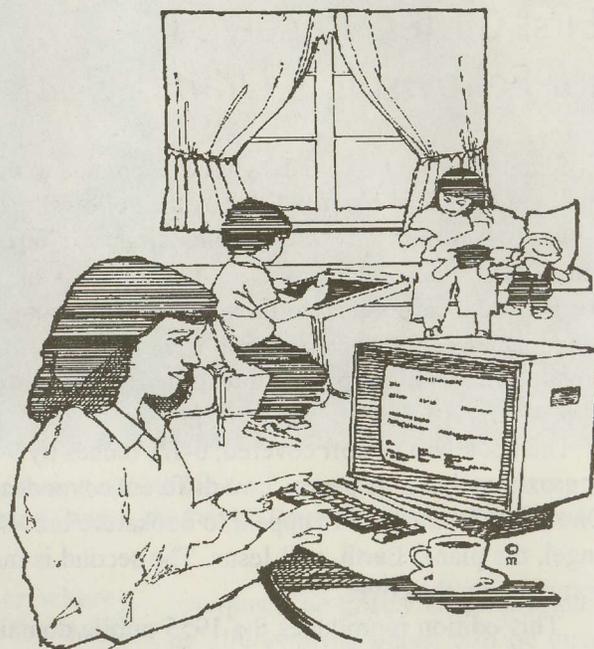
"During all those years I never had met other readers. If they existed, I was unaware of them. There must be many

like me around, who, in their sequestered vale, have perused the book, formed their own ideas, and attained a private understanding. When coming out in the open, so to speak, one is suddenly confronted with other interpretations and explanations, some inspiring, some of them at variance with those which one has developed during the years of solitary study."

Klijn is quite comfortable meeting and developing friendships with other *Urantia Book* readers through Little UrantiaL.

"There are people who have a dim view on the possibilities of electronic communication, thinking it a far cry from the real thing," he says. "But the human personality is quite capable to transcend the inherent limitations of e-mail, so I found out. At least it succeeds to evoke in me the whole gamut of human emotions which I experience in the off-line world. At first the temperature of the ongoing discussions surprised me, lacking much of the gentleness of the dove, as I saw it. But since then I have visited newsgroups of the Sci. Sceptic and the Sci. Archeology, to name two of many, and by comparison, the Little UrantiaLs, though no less prolific in their output, are a gentle, forgiving lot, due to their study of *The Urantia Book*, I wager."

Not only are Internet surfers able to establish contact with other *Urantia*



Book readers through the list, in some cases that is the only opportunity they have for group study.

"Isolated as I am, in the Pocono Mountains, Little UrantiaL lets me be among other readers of *The Urantia Book* every day of the year," says George Zuberbuehler of White Haven, Pennsylvania. "I look forward to opening my e-mail each morning and finding familiar voices speaking about things that matter to me.

"This forum provides a stimulus for my mind and spirit. I especially appreciate the discussions that directly address *Urantia Book* content. And I like the fact that it keeps me informed about what's happening in the Urantia movement on a timely basis."

Michelle Klimesh of Danville, California also has noted that the rather impersonal medium, offering so few of the cues common to face-to-face or telephone conversation, sometimes stimulates exchanges that lack some of the politeness that students of the *Urantia Papers* employ in personal conversation.

"I remember my first shocking week or two of reading this list," Klimesh says. "Many times I've been tempted to unsubscribe because of the arguments between posters. But, I've been here almost two years now."

"I think of Little UrantiaL as a gold mine. You have to dig through a lot of rocks and dirt and mud to find the treasures, but the treasures that you find make the dirt seem insignificant. Get your muck boots and your shovel and stick around for awhile. You will learn to recognize those people who always have something worthwhile to say. You will also learn that if you want to see something worth reading, you may have to write it yourself."

Duane Faw of Laguna Hills, California, writes: "Occasionally there are posts which are inspiring, educational, or amusing. Several regular [writer]s are candidates for Reversion Directors in the future. However, much of the time is spent in chit-chat of a friendly nature — which I enjoy; and an inordinate amount of time on bad-mouthing each other, which I do not enjoy. Being Urantians, they berate each other lovingly, but fiercely."

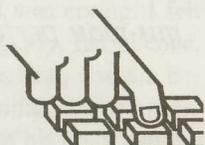
"It is politically correct to criticize all organizations; some for doing too much, some for doing too little, and some for doing both at the same time. The list has great potential for good, but is going through a very human stage — on the way to the stars? I hope so."

Dan Massey, who lives in the Washington, DC, area, is a long-time list member. "Perhaps the most interesting thing about Little UrantiaL is its ability to provide nearly real-time interactions with people who are too widely dispersed around the world to meet face-to-face," he says. "Most subscribers you will never meet personally or share ideas within the give-and-take of a study group."

"Through the mailing list mechanism ideas can be exchanged, on a daily basis, with a much more varied community of *Urantia Book* readers than exists anywhere else in the world, with the possible exception of one of the Fellowship's International Conferences. At the same time, since communication is by exchange of prepared text, ideas can be presented in greater depth than is possible in conversation. In addition, readers who have difficulty expressing their thoughts clearly in a conventional social setting can more easily make their ideas available to the group."

All you need to join the mailing list is a computer, modem, and access to the Internet through a service provider. There are no dues or fees for membership in Little UrantiaL. All are welcome.

For more information about how to subscribe to Little UrantiaL, contact Mark Turrin in California at (510) 937-7473 or email "UrantiaL@bidnet.bidnet.com."



Gender Series

Continued from page 7

assigned to men and women in which each reigns supreme.

"The Future of Patriarchy: Gender Bias in *The Urantia Book* and New Paradigms of Reality" by Jeanne Melchior. Unlike Gardner, Melchior believes the book is gender biased. "Many of us feel excluded rather than invited by the predominantly male symbolism of God in *The Urantia Book*," she says.

"Functional Gender Designation in *The Urantia Book*" by Stuart Kerr. This illustrated essay seeks to explain why apparent gender-biased language is used. "A new revelation is always contaminated by older evolutionary techniques," Kerr says. He then analyzes gender characteristics found at various levels of personality — Deity, angel, midwayer and mortal. Kerr notes that mother love is not an acquirement, but rather an inherent endowment bestowed by the Universe Mother Spirit.

"The Complementary Natures and Potentials of Men and Women in Partnership" by Claudia Ayers and Larry Watkins. The central message of this essay is the potential for a partnership of the sexes based on teamwork. Men and women think and communicate differently, they write. Each viewpoint and inherent difference has value and must not be pushed aside in the goal of obtaining equal rights for women.

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Coming soon! Flashpoints in *The Urantia Book*. How to deal with new readers in reconciling beliefs in reincarnation and astrology with teachings in *The Urantia Book*.

General Council

Continued from page 3

Committee, according to Chairman Marilyn Kulieke. If they indicate in survey responses that the Council's action, as well as the proposed amendments to the constitution, violate their autonomy, then the changes must be ratified at the next Triennial Delegate Assembly in 1997, followed by another General Council vote.

Approval of Amicus Brief

Undoubtedly, the most controversial issue debated by the Council was the question of whether to file an amicus brief (friend of the court) with the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, which will consider Urantia Foundation's request to have the U.S. District Court's 1995 decision nullified.

In February 1995 Judge Warren H. Urbom granted Kristen Maaherra's motion for summary judgment, ruling that the renewal of copyright of *The Urantia Book* was invalid, and placing the book into the public domain.

After a lengthy and searching debate, the Council voted 18 to 15 to file the brief.

"This filing is a one-time event," says Fellowship President Steve Dreier. "There are no plans for further legal involvement on the part of the Fellowship. The brief makes the court aware of the existence of the Fellowship and of the interests of the Fellowship in the outcome of the appeal."

Elections

Due to the resignation of John Hay, Boulder, Colorado, for personal reasons, a vacancy on the General Council was filled with the election of Brian Smith of Encinita, California. Councilor David Kantor, Lafayette, California, was also elected to fill the resulting vacancy of Chairman of the Special Projects Committee. The General Council and Executive Committee both passed resolutions thanking Hay for his years of devoted service to *The Urantia Book* and the reader community. In other elections, Lila Dogim, Cliffside, New Jersey, resigned from the Education Committee to fill a vacancy on the International Fellowship Committee.

Society Chartering

Avi Dogim, chairman of the Charter Committee, reported that the application has been approved for a group in Wisconsin to become chartered as a Fellowship society. The target date for admission of the new society is scheduled for September 14, 1996.

First Stirrings of IC '99

It's never too soon to begin thinking about where to hold the next International Conference. Councilors offered a wide range of suggestions, including Alaska, Vancouver, British Columbia, the Midwest, Southeast and even a cruise ship.

Dare to Risk

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.

To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.

To reach for another is to risk involvement.

To explore your ideas, your dreams, before a crowd is to risk their loss.

To love is to risk not being loved in return.

To live is to risk dying.

To believe is to risk failure.

But, risks must be taken, because

the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.

The people who risk nothing, do nothing,

have nothing, are nothing.

They may avoid suffering, and sorrow, but

they cannot learn, feel change, grow, love, live.

Chained by their attitudes, they are slaves;

they have forfeited their freedom.

Only a person who risks is free.

Author Unknown



Forget not – it is your personal faith in the exceedingly great and precious promises of God that ensures your becoming partakers of the divine nature.



It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.

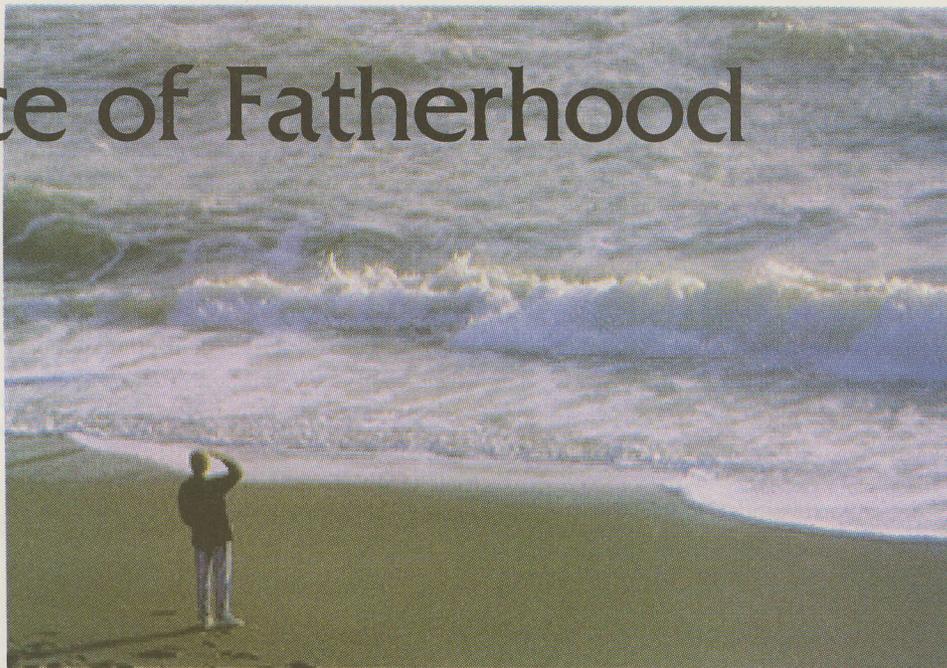
Psalm 18:32

The Urantia Book, page 1609

The Science of Fatherhood

By Claire Thurston

Editor's Note: This story is an excerpt from an article published in 1991 in QUEST magazine. The author will also present this material in a workshop at IC'96. Thurston is currently working on a book to demonstrate a philosophical framework that can be used in everyday life, to give mental and spiritual leverage over decisions which affect a father's behavior towards his children.



I had been reading *The Urantia Book* for 10 years, and had a hard time initially accepting the authoritative tone of the book. I linked this tone with the unabashed focus on God the Father. Didn't the revelators know this was politically incorrect? I had read Mary Daly's *Beyond God the Father*, and knew I wasn't supposed to need HIM anymore. I remember a fellow woman muralist in San Francisco confessing ashamedly that she still found herself praying to God the Father despite all her feminist ideology.

But *The Urantia Book* was so compelling, I just couldn't dismiss God the Father as a theological throwback.

A Father's Unique Contribution

At first he is simply present. His presence, characterized by its otherness, becomes linked with the world or existence itself. When existence comes into focus for the baby, it is undeniably real. All the senses — taste, touch, and sight — confirm its reality. Just as mother will always be indelibly linked with the merge/memory, so will father be indelibly associated with the fact of existence.

This sounds abstract, but a father can feel deeply personal premonitions of his role even at his child's birth. Psychologist, Arthur Colman, in the anthology *Fathering: It's Not The Same*, speaks, "The nurse gave the baby to me. The warmth of his body, his eyes looking at me — I was crying. I felt deep joy. Not a gushing joy, but silence. Holding him, feeling his heat, I was a benign presence there, a pillar, a silent presence. I felt the warmth of his body and the

strength of my arms. The baby needed protection and security, a protection that gives freedom to move as well as comfort."

Relating to father means reaching across the gulf of separateness that lies between parent and child. If father responds, a new kind of personal relationship begins for the child, different from the previous blended state with mother. Put another way, the child first experiences utter separateness (distinct from the merge/memory of mother) while maintaining a personal relatedness to father. That relationship is characterized by separateness powerfully linked, a primal I-Thou pattern.

The Latin *transcendere* literally means "to climb over or beyond." Within the context of personal religious experience, the human father essentially introduces transcendence. This is not to deny that mother's care is equally important for the child's spiritual development.

A helpful distinction may lie in the linkage of mother's and father's roles in infancy with preparation for later adult experiences of immanent and transcendent spirituality, respectively. By honoring father's role, there certainly is no intention to cast any aspersions on single mothers, but rather to encourage them (and support groups or social agencies) to seek out positive male family members or friends.

James Fowler, a leading thinker in the field of the psychology of religion, in his book *Stages of Faith*, talks about many different dimensions of faith. In simplest form, he defines faith as the "relation of trust in and loyalty to the transcendent." As representative of otherness, and hence transcen-

dence, the father is strategically situated to nourish spiritual dialogue.

When father throws his baby high in the air, think of the feeling the infant must have when he or she lands in strong arms. This kind of play contributes to the sense that the universe is a safe place. If this relational process grows, the child may feel safer negotiating risks and moving towards independence. In other words, father can create a context where faith remains anchored within the changing perceptions of the child's growing world.

But how betrayed a child can feel when father breaks the I-Thou trust. Therapist John Bradshaw, appearing in his recent series on public television, talks about his absent alcoholic father. As an adult, Bradshaw describes how he still suffers from father-loss, the longing for a feeling of safe haven, of protection in the cosmos.

Psychologist Peter Blos, in his book *Son and Father Before and Beyond the Oedipus Complex*, records the words of one grown man who remembers his childhood feelings. "My father never acknowledged me as me: I did not exist in him, I had to be in his presence in order to exist for him. When the baby looks up from the cradle and sees his father for the first time, that's God. He had the power to extinguish me. He loved me in his way, but I was craving for his love as me, not his image of me ..."

It is easy to imagine how this bitter son's lament could go unnoticed. Without a fulfilling I-Thou experience of his own, without a sense of such internal affirmation, the father would rely on external images of himself for his primary identity. Similarly, he

would have to rely on an image of his son in order to relate at all. How vast the tragedy of lost opportunity for personal spiritual development when father is disconnected from his own inner confirmation.

A Question of Approach

Psychologists have only recently begun to study the father's role. But results have been so inconclusive that fatherhood specialists such as Michael Lamb proclaim, "Until we have a better understanding of the father-child relationship, attempts to characterize its effects are probably premature."

Students of behavior are always looking for ways to improve research techniques, but perhaps an examination of the underlying assumptions behind different approaches may lead to a fruitful direction for understanding fatherhood.

In psychology, the father-child bond is described in terms such as attachment and affiliation. Carefully avoided are such murky concepts as love. Moral development and value motivation, such as altruism, are subsumed under the heading of learned behavior. All behavior falls within the confines of a "body-mind" model, body encompassing instinctual behavior and mind encompassing learned behavior.

Religionists assume an additional category of reality which includes love, faith and absolute values such as truth, beauty and goodness. To encompass these additional realities the body-mind model must expand, becoming a body-mind-spirit model.

Psychology seeks to gain knowledge of human behavior through observation and claims an empirical basis for its findings. Religion, on the other hand, seeks to guide human beings towards value goals, claiming a revelatory basis for its teachings. Can a third approach provide a new way of talking about fatherhood in which empirical observations and value-goals can be joined together? Is it possible to unite the scientific attitude of psychology with spiritual insight, notwithstanding their different models of humanity?

Philosophy can walk the tightrope between psychology and religion if certain pitfalls of determinism can be avoided. On the psychological side, one must sidestep predicting behavior. For example, if father does x to a child, then y will happen. On the spiritual side, one must sidestep making moral judgments. For example, a good father does x, y and z . By avoiding spiritual or

psychological determinism, a philosophical approach can prevent blanket generalizations, such as "an insecure attachment to mother during the first year of life always leads to adult dysfunction."

The Gender Stumbling Block

If father's transcendent connection is truly so primary in infancy, then why has it gone unrecognized for so long? What could be obscuring our view of the process? Perhaps something right in front of our eyes; namely, sex roles. Sex role issues may have overshadowed the spiritual dimension of father's role from both psychological and religious viewpoints.

Freud intuitively senses a spiritual dimension to father's role when he links father with the development of a super-ego. According to the theory, at age three or four, the child incorporates his father's rules and values partially as a means of resolving desires for the parent of the opposite sex. Fear of castration catapults a young boy into internalizing his father's values while penis envy supposedly makes a young girl accept her father's values and her mother's sex role. To keep his theory consistent, Freud concludes that girls have less well-developed super-egos than boys because their identification with their mothers is not due to castration anxiety.

Freud's preoccupation with sex roles distorts his perception of father's role. Although Freud senses that father is a key player in the realms of standards and values, his theory tries to join sex roles with the assimilation of those moral rules and values. His sexist foundation grounded in early 20th century values seems glaring today. Unfortunately, Freud leaves an intellectual legacy which paints father as powerful and important, yet primarily fearsome.

Gender in relation to God's personal nature confuses human fatherhood, as well. "Personal" is defined in *Webster's New World Dictionary* as "involving persons or human beings (personal relationships)." Since people are either male or female, it is easy to confuse sexuality (biology and sex roles) with the definition of personal. So, belief in a personal God can become relating to God the Male or God the Female. Some who worship God the Father may assume that they are worshipping God the Male.

But the human father who introduces transcendence is first sensed by the child as

the first other, not the first male. If one can see how the human father introduces God the Father as God the Other, the Transcendent, as opposed to God the Male, then one could see the logic behind the idea of God loving his children as a father rather than like a father.

Human father's primary power is not his maleness, but his ability to reinforce values. Beginning in infancy, father conveys transcendence which unconsciously readies the child for a conscious dialogue about values later.

Bradshaw, in his program "Where Are You, Father?," cites a recent study which shows that the mere presence of father increases the child's moral development seen in situational standardized tests. Because Freud's vision of man does not include a spiritual dimension, he overlooks much of father's positive contribution in infancy and portrays the birth of the conscience or super-ego as an essentially traumatic ordeal as opposed to a natural evolutionary process.

And if fearsome power has characterized cultural ideas of maleness, and God the Father is perceived as male, then fearsome power may characterize God in many peoples' eyes. So even fathers who believe in God may connect fatherhood with fearsome power while overlooking the spiritual privilege of parenthood. Sadly, this distortion may partially account for our cultural alienation from spirituality in general.

Resolving Conflicts About Fatherhood

So few men have close relationships with their fathers or with other men. Consequently, men suffer, marriages suffer and families suffer. Those who never feel the protection of a loving father often have trouble delaying gratification, causing other disorders like overeating, drug addiction or alcohol abuse.

How can we break this chain of neglect and despair? Emotionally, we have to grieve. According to Bradshaw, first we must demystify our fathers, discover their pain and understand their wounds. We must grieve and eventually come to forgive them. Then we can grieve for our own childhood loss and open ourselves to father-nurturing from other people, friends or mentors.

Intellectually and spiritually, we need many forums for discussing fatherhood,

from the dinner table to the classroom to the pulpit.

There are so many dimensions to the problem. Some fathers may feel an emptiness from missing the I-Thou experience with their own fathers. Others may feel split by the cultural heritage of fatherhood which denies a spiritual concept of a loving father in favor of a powerful but fearsome father. Still others may feel pressured to be nurturing in the same way as women, not understanding that father-nurturance may be different from mother-nurturance.

In order to be meaningful, any debate about father's evolving role will have to center around values. These idealized goals can provide the inspiration necessary to affect personal behavior as well as determine a basis for social change. Only when fathers feel the inherent importance and dignity of their role from all quarters of society will the tide of family breakdown be reversed. Until then, the power of father-love remains largely untapped.

Testing the Theory

After completing the conceptual groundwork, I decided to test the assumption that father's role is predominantly spiritual in infancy, by interviewing 100 fathers of preschool children in San Francisco. These fathers ranged from unwed teenagers across the spectrum to wealthy professionals, as well as many ethnic and religious denominations.

The results of the survey were very clear. Not only do fathers pass on traditional values from institutional religion, but they also convey spirituality through a trust-based parenting style. Some fathers who don't participate in institutional religion nonetheless believe in absolute values, like truth, beauty and goodness.

If fathers know how and why they matter to their children, especially in the first few years of life, then their involvement will bear fruit, changing patterns within the family and in the world at large.

Recommended Reading

- Beane, W.C. and Doty, W.G. eds. *Myths, Rites, Symbols: A Mircea Eliade Reader*, Vol.1. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.
- Blos, Peter. *Son and Father Before and Beyond the Oedipus Complex*. New York: The Free Press, A Division of MacMillan, Inc. 1985, p.35.
- Colman, Arthur M.D. reported by Levis, Leonard, Chapter 1: *Birthing, Bonding and the Infancy Stage of Fathering*.
- Erikson, Erik H. *Young Man Luther*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1958, p.124.
- Fowler, J.W. *Stages of Faith*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981.
- Grief, Esther Blank, Chapter 6: *Fathers, Children and Moral Development*.
- Kagan, Jerome. *The Nature of the Child*. New York: Basic Books, 1984, p.35.
- Lamb, M. ed. *The Role of the Father in Child Development*. New York: John Wiley, 1976.
- Mahler, M.S., F. Pine, and A. Bergman. *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant*. New York: Basic Books, 1975.
- Sayers, R. *Fathering: It's Not the Same*. Larkspur, CA: Nurtury Family School, 1983.
- Wagner, S. et al. "Metaphorical Mapping in Human Infants." *Child Development*, 1981, 52, p.728-31.

IC'96

If You'd Like To Prepare

Here is suggested reading for those who would like to prepare for participation in workshops at IC'96.

Sunday

"Patterns of the Universe" by Pat Fearey, Chuck Thurston, Stephen Zendt, Claudia Ayers, Larry Watkins & John Creger:

Review all references to Pattern in *The Urantia Book*. Bring magazine photos of nature images, such as plowed fields.

Monday

"Harmonizing the Global Family" by David Glass:

Urantia Book page 1486:4-5, Paper 134, Section 4, Paragraphs 1 and 2.

Wednesday

"The Golden Rule and the Gospel" by Jeffrey Wattles:

Urantia Book pages 1650 and 1651.

"Gender in the 90s: Evolutionary and Revelatory Perspectives" by Alison Gardner, Stuart Kerr, Jeanne Melchior, Byron Belitsos, Claudia Ayers & Larry Watkins:

Urantia Book pages 8, 22 and 23, 40, 53, 59, 76, 79, 87, 88, 90, 93, 154, 273, 366, 368 to 370, 406, 415, 419 and 420, 422, 432, 477, 481, 516, 545, 564, 581, 637, 765, 774, 778 and 779, 794, 828, 831, 836, 864, 913 to 943, 977, 984, 1007, 1022, 1186, 1193, 1287 and 1288, 1428, 1443, 1471 to 1473, 1546, 1581, 1612 to 1614, 1622, 1642, 1671, 1679, 1775 and 1776, 1838 to 1841, 1855, 2065, 2097.

Thursday

"The Spirit of Community" by Jill Hull & panel members:

Urantia Book pages 1775 (Section 2), 1227 (paragraph 6), 927 (p 5), 1431 (p 1), 1098 (p 1 and 3), 1302 (p 7), 1727 (p 4), 1955 (p 6), 1861 (p 5), 196 (p 4), 1289 (p 2), 1600 (p 3), 966 (p2), 1130 (p 2), 1094 (p 2), 1095 (p 3), 1088 (p 8), 1000 (p 2 and 7), 1862 (p 7), 312 (p 1), 1477 (p 1), 432 (p 6), 1245 (p 1), 1964 (p 3), 1115, 1134 (p 1), 1206 (p 2), 1705 (p 2), 2094 (p 5), 1740 (p 5), 1221 (p2).

Graduation of Ruth E. Renn

By Carolyn Kendall

It seems that Ruth Renn (1896-1996) had always been around — dependable, shy and unassuming. Yet, when you got to know her, you realized that she was a woman of great ability.

Renn can be cited for important contributions to the Urantia movement. In 1958 she formed the first Junior Urantia class, comprising 10 children of Glenview Society members. She brought them to perform for the First Urantia Society, Chicago, June 5, 1960, and they charmed their audience to ecstatic praise.

Their class motto was Progress. Renn developed lesson plans that encompassed the teachings of *The Urantia Book*, including the master universe, the central and grand universes with their architectural divisions, the geologic history of our planet, Andon and Fonta, the various races of mankind, and the five epochal revelations. She also devised creative depictions of the adjutant mind spirits, values, fruits of the spirit, and Thought Adjusters. Perhaps most effective were her versions of Jesus' ministry to the people he encountered.

In short order there was demand for her lessons to be published. Copies of the material were tested by several parents with their own children, but results were inconclusive. It was conceded that without the impact of a dynamic personality such as Ruth Renn's the lessons would not be as effective.

Renn oversaw the children's program at the 1978 General Conference at Geneva Lake, Wisconsin.

In 1975 Urantia Foundation published Renn's 103-page book, *Study Aids for Part IV of The Urantia Book — The Life and Teachings of Jesus*. It was a well-organized compilation of the teachings of Jesus, which emphasized the parables, his religion, promises, miracles and teaching methods. The past bestowals of Michael, Jesus' family lineage and timetables of significant events were also arranged in a handy format.

Her family isn't quite sure when she joined the Forum, but she often reminisced about events that occurred in the 1930s. Grandson Randy Renn related how she had consulted Dr. Sadler professionally and expressed an inner quest for something more spiritual in her life. The doctor invited her to join the Forum.

Soon after, her husband Leroy appeared at Dr. Sadler's front door, hat in hand, announcing that he, too, would be going to the Forum with her. Leroy served as president of the Seventy in 1949.

Renn herself was vice president of the Seventy in 1953. She later



Ruth Renn at first Summer Study Session, August 1963. Photographer: Henry Gill.

served on the Miscellaneous Activities (now Special Projects), Foreign Extension (now International Fellowship), and Fraternal Relations committees of Urantia Brotherhood (now Fellowship). When she could no longer attend study groups, she kept up a lively personal ministry with *Urantia Book* readers, often writing notes of sympathetic warmth, commendation and encouragement.

Renn was born in Crystal Lake, Illinois and was a member of Presbyterian churches in Chicago and suburbs. She lived for many years at a retirement home in Evanston, Illinois and passed to the worlds on high January 22, 1996. She would have been 100 on July 29th.

She leaves a daughter, Betty MacDonald of Albuquerque, New Mexico and six grandchildren. She predeceased her husband Leroy (d. 1950), son Richard (d. 1970) and granddaughter Corlin Renn Sherwood (d. 1993).



Ruth Renn's Junior *Urantia Book* study group, June 1960. Front row (left to right): Randy, David and Corlin Renn; Jack Harris and Steve Stirling. Second row: John Burton, Ruth Renn, Tim Renn, Denny Rowley and Chuck Burton. Left above: Adele Harris.

Calendar

May 18, 1996, Ascension Day Conference, Oklahoma City, OK. Sponsored by First Society of Oklahoma. Contact: Tom and Karen Allen (405) 722-7691.

May 24-27, Annual Reunion of Florida Readers, Leesburg, FL. Theme: Unity Through Diversity. Contact: Joe DeCosmo, 209 S.E. 6th Ave., Boynton Beach, FL 33435.

May 25-26, Whole Life Expo, Boulder, CO. Contact: Paula Thompson or Mary Ebben (800) 767-5683.

June 15-17, American Bookseller's Association, 1996 Trade Show, Chicago. Contact: The Fellowship (312) 327-0424.

June 22, Annual Mid-Atlantic Picnic, Ellicott City, MD. Contact: Buddy Roogow (410) 461-9063.

August 3-8, 1996 International Conference, Flagstaff, AZ. Theme: Living Faith. Contact: The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614. (312) 327-0424, Fax: (312) 327-6159.

Sept. 14, Installation of the Wisconsin Society, Sheboygan Falls, WI. Contact: Bob Arkens (715) 823-6674.

Sept. 15-21, 5th International Urania Conference, Volga River, Russia. Contact: David Kantor (510) 283-4815.

August 1-10, 1997, Reef Party 97, 10-day Cruise in the Great Barrier Reef for Urantia Book Readers. Sponsored by Australian Urantia Book readers. Contact: Ann Bendall, P.O. Box 839, Nambour, QLD 4560, Australia. (Fax: 074-49-1817)

IC '96 Video Project Needs Volunteers

Children's Stories About Jesus will be filmed at IC '96 and based on the faith experiences of interviewed subjects. Volunteers needed for content ideas and production assistance.

Please contact:

David Hubbard at (905) 270-7391
 Scott McDougall at (416) 488-6760
 550 Webb Dr., PH 1-8,
 Mississauga, Ontario L5B 3Y4

Volunteer Opportunities at IC '96

The IC '96 Planning committee would like to extend an invitation for conference attendees in the following areas:

Toddler Program — Work with children six months through four years in a stimulating outdoor play environment and also indoors with arts and crafts and stories. Although this is a cooperative parent program, non-parents are warmly encouraged to volunteer also. Call Beth Wenger at (602) 971-8247.

Youth Program — Imagine yourself living in the times of Jesus, with weaving and pottery and Roman soldiers looking over your shoulders. The five through 12 years olds will be creating a Jerusalem Fair and could use your help. Call Sara Blackstock at (707) 747-1854.

Teen Program — Challenge, adventure, music and games. The teens will be fully engaged during the entire conference getting to know each other and themselves. If you can help, call Doug Parker at (541) 994-3264.

Transportation — The Youth Program and Teen Program are planning off-campus activities that require transportation. Call Rhonda Grubb at (602) 841-7649.

Afternoon Activities — We still need volunteers to help with family activities in the afternoon. Call Tony Finstad at (206) 402-4315.

Moving Crews — We need people to help move tables, chairs and production equipment each day. If you have a strong back and would like to help, call Arley Grubb at (602) 841-7649.

Thanks for your help.

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