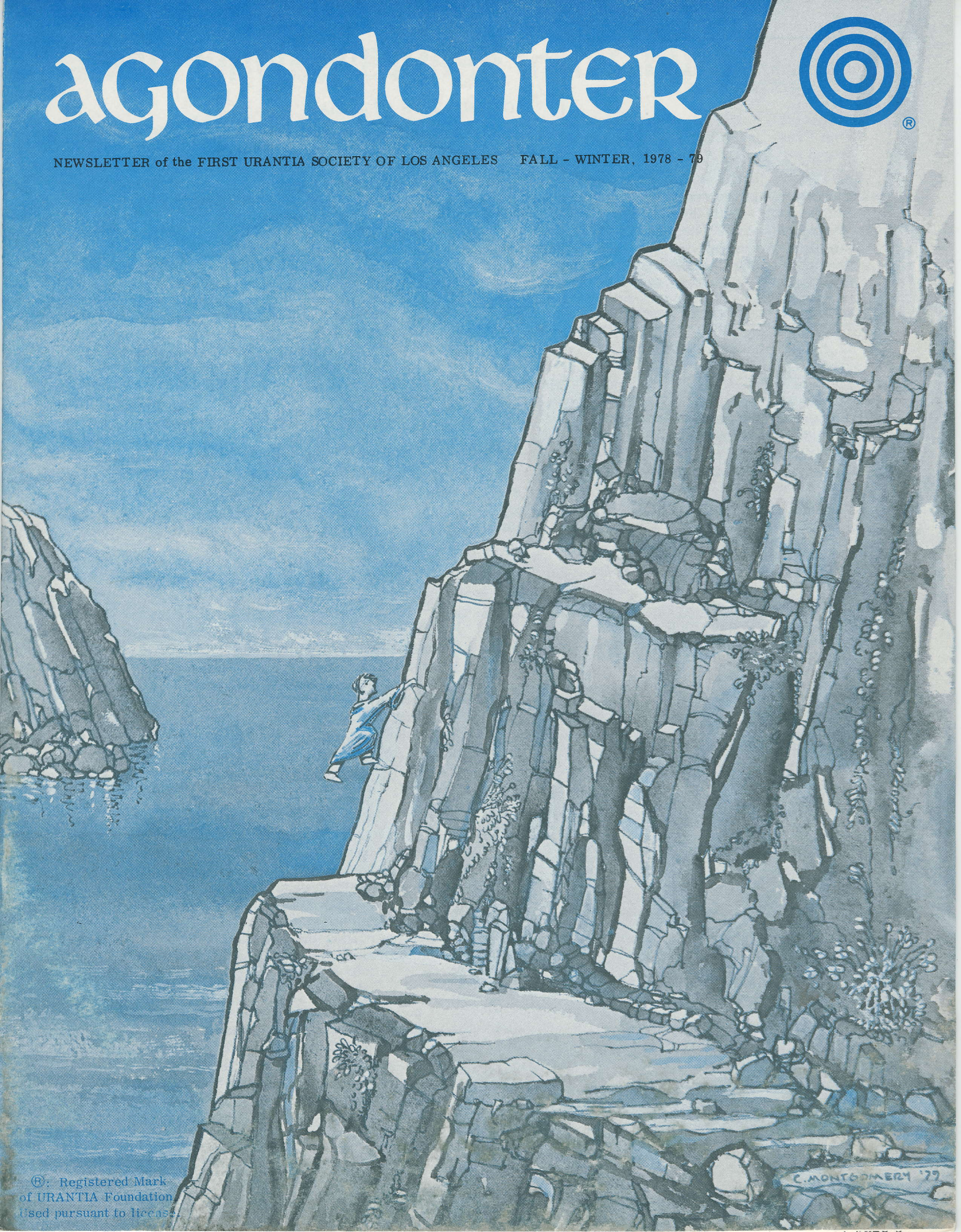


agondonter



NEWSLETTER of the FIRST URANTIA SOCIETY OF LOS ANGELES FALL - WINTER, 1978 - 79



Southland Happenings

THE FIRST URANTIA SOCIETY OF LOS ANGELES

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AGONDONTER FALL-WINTER, 1978-79

The AGONDONTER is the quarterly publication of FUSLA, the First URANTIA Society of Los Angeles.

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While it is our editorial policy to be consistent with the spirit and teachings of The URANTIA Book, this publication does not officially represent any URANTIA organization.

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90053

On Jerusem, the ascenders from isolated worlds such as Urantia "are known as agondonters, meaning evolutionary will creatures who can believe without seeing, persevere when isolated, and triumph over insuperable difficulties even when alone."*

*UB p. 579

*Quotations from The URANTIA Book, ©1955, used by permission of the URANTIA Foundation, Chicago.

ORIENTATION AT JULIA'S

On Friday, December 8, Julia, with the Faws and Paul Cooke, hosted a combination orientation and question-answering meeting for prospective new members and others interested in the Book. Thirty-three people attended, pointing up, Julia says, the need to conduct this type of meeting on an ongoing basis.



DAN LOWEREE ADMITTED TO MEMBERSHIP

At a special gathering in Westwood on Wednesday, December 20, twelve people participated in the induction of Dan Lowerree as the 156th FUSLA member. Dan is bravely coping with a serious disease, and he evidences a singular and steadfast devotion to the Father that is inspiring.

NEW YEAR'S EVE: QUIETLY IN HOMES

Kermit and Jackie Anderson, as well as Julia Fenderson, had a group of people in their home on New Year's Eve to pray in the new year, a satisfying activity, providing an alternative kind of joy to that which is normally celebrated on this Holiday evening.



THE FAWS CONFER IN CHICAGO

In January, Duane and Lucile Faw visited the Foundation in Chicago to discuss various practical matters of concern to the Society and the URANTIA Brotherhood as a whole. Duane is a Professor of Law at Pepperdine University, Malibu Campus, and a retired Marine Corps General. Lucile is a licensed real estate person, active in community affairs, and served last year as FUSLA's Vice-President. The Faws recently moved to the Malibu area from Orange County.



HUMOR FEST

On January 18, about forty people assembled in the home of Tammy Ericksmoen to hear Vern try out some new material for his speaking tours; some inspirational and some humorous. He had Rich Keeler nearly rolling in the aisles. But Rich is easy to amuse; he even giggled at the serious parts.



NOTE: The three-concentric-circle symbol on the cover is a Registered Mark of URANTIA Foundation in Chicago. It is used by the first URANTIA Society of Los Angeles pursuant to license.

Family of God Beams into China

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

On December 3, just one week after the ban on English broadcasts was lifted in Red China, the Family of God beamed its first program into this untouched area. This is truly a momentous global development. Nearly a third of the planet's population—over one billion people—resides in mainland China.

Now the message of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, the essence of the teachings of Jesus, will reach this great nation.

The Family of God was founded by Vern Grimley, whose voice is heard on the radio broadcasts. Though inspired by the URANTIA Book, and an avid student of its teachings for over twenty years, Vern never mentions or quotes from the Book on the air or at public gatherings unless they are composed of URANTIA Book readers.

Vern and his associates hope, however, that individuals hearing the radio message will write,

and that some of them may prove to be truly interested in the source of the teachings, and will become prospects for personal introduction to the Book.

The Family of God has had good success in this regard in India. Two or three years ago the first Book was mailed there, (after the correspondent's sincerity and receptivity became evident) and the first Asian Study Group was born, in Yeditha, India. Since then about a dozen Books have been sent to India.

Vern reports that it is first determined, in a series of letter exchanges, that the prospective URANTIA Book reader is really interested and has the desire to function as a leader in disseminating the teachings in his locality.

We wonder who the first native leader will be to accept The URANTIA Book and plant its teachings in his Chinese homeland □

Julia Fenderson recently realized the dream of a lifetime when she visited the homeland of Jesus and became better acquainted with its ancient heritage and fascinating present-day culture.

She spent much time around the beautiful Sea of Galilee, and studied the Jesus Papers in The URANTIA Book as she visited many of the places where Jesus lived, worked, taught and travelled.

This was purely a vacation and study trip, an unusual change for Julia, who, as URANTIA Brotherhood Field Representative, travels extensively on Brotherhood business, especially the business of fostering new Study Groups.

One of her most moving experiences was in Jordan, at Philadelphia (now Amman) where she joined in the Moslem custom of daily group prayer. "Imagine," says Julia, "a million people at one time, when they hear the call broadcast over the city, taking time out from their everyday activities and worshipping the Father together. If only we Americans could be so dedicated! I was strongly reminded that The URANTIA Book was given to enhance this religion, as well as all religions of the world."

Julia placed five URANTIA Books in libraries throughout the middle-east: at Nazareth, Tiberius, Jerusalem, and two at the American Hellenic Library in Athens, an influential center attracting scholars from all over the world. "Perhaps a Rodan of our generation will drop in," reflects Julia, "and find the Book, and be the seed, instrumental in the spread of truth elsewhere in the world." □

Julia Visits Jesus' Homeland



Julia aboard a "ship of the desert" in Israel

URANTIA® Book Conferences

Conference Experiences

by Ellen Montgomery

Lake Geneva



Probably the largest assembly of URANTIA Book readers ever to gather in one place attended the 1978 URANTIA Brotherhood General Conference in Wisconsin, August 13-18. About 550 readers (including close to 80 children) studied, fellowshiped, worshipped and played at the George Williams College campus in Williams Bay on the shores of beautiful Lake Geneva.

The activities began with an enormous outdoor get-acquainted reception hosted by the First URANTIA Society of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

At the heart of the General Conference were the morning small group sessions, organized topically, enabling readers to study a series of related papers on successive days. In-depth workshops were also offered on "Education" and "Publications" by Lynne Kulieke and Barbara Kulieke, respectively.

Each afternoon there were three presentations conducted in larger groups on various thought-provoking subjects: "Discoveries in Science as Related to The URANTIA Book," "Furthering the Spiritual Renaissance," and "How to Run a Revelation," to mention several.

The Orvonton URANTIA Society of Chicago shouldered responsibility for the evening programs, held in the unusual oval Lewis Auditorium.
(continued on page 6)

Santa Cruz



"Perfecting Unity of Spiritual Purpose" was the theme for a one-day family gathering of Bay Area URANTIA Book Study Groups on November 19, in Santa Cruz.

Julia Fenderson reports that eighty-six readers enjoyed presentations and shared music at a school set in the midst of a lovely redwood forest. Crissy and Lee Smith and George Thornberry were responsible for the fine organization of this California gathering □

Hawaii



There were brilliant red hibiscus flowers, philodendron leaves the size of elephant ears, and arresting varicolored yellow, green and red foliage of the unusual croton shrub. There was a schedule where rushing about was not only unnecessary but irrelevant. And there were 100 students of The URANTIA Book with their little ones.

The event was the First Pacific Conference for students of The URANTIA Book, held September 23-25 at the Makapala Retreat Grounds on the "Big Island" of Hawaii, and the predictable result of such a fortunate combination of physical beauty, time, people and purpose was a wealth of memorable spiritual and social experiences.

The conference theme ("Spiritual and Material Reality") was elaborated on by speakers Peter Lindemann, Fran Huntington, Tony Johnson, Phil Calabrese, Dick Prince, Jim Kimmel and David Saunders, with greetings and Chicago updates given by Meredith and Irene Sprunger and Tom and Carolyn Kendall. Speakers from the mainland received the traditional Hawaiian introduction, an orchid lei, bestowed with a kiss by Marian Salmo Lindemann.

In addition to providing food for spiritual thought, Pacific Conference planners built in ample amounts of free time for small group worship, renewing and creating friendships, playing music and for sharing experiences.

The evening entertainment was particularly enjoyable. On Saturday night Chuck Thurston and Phil Eversoul presented a selection of inspirational multi-media productions—stunning pictorial images combined with music and readings.

Bob Slagle directed the Sunday evening program—a unique "Reality Workshop"—guiding us through a series of interpersonal exercises, including an uproarious laughing contest, won hands down by Frances Lincoln from Big Island.

Fellow readers came from the islands of Oahu, Molokai, Maui and Hawaii, as well as from the states of California, New York, Indiana, Illinois, Washington, Oregon and Alaska. California, as usual, was well-represented at Makapala: Phil and Cindy Calabrese (Arcata), Phil Eversoul and Chuck Thurston (San Francisco), Jay Newbern

(continued on page 6)

Well Attended in 1978

Northern Get-togethers

by Alice Clark

Washington



Another Northwest Get-Together for Students of The URANTIA Book has passed into history. There were nearly a hundred attenders this year, counting the children. We met on Saturday, September 30.

From far away came John Hales of Chicago, Beverly Wold of Hemet, California [member of the First URANTIA Society of Los Angeles,] and Merlene Anderson of Anchorage, Alaska.

Largest delegations came from Victoria, B.C. and Portland, Oregon. Eight came from Idaho, the first representatives we have had from that state, and one Australian came, by way of Canada.

Saturday afternoon was devoted to small group discussions on the topic of "Sex, Love and Marriage" conducted by Gordon Bellamy of Victoria, B.C. During this time, school-age children went on an excursion to Rocky Reach Dam which included a stop at the Dairy Queen on the way back. A hot dog picnic supper ended the afternoon.

Highlights of the evening program were a talk on nutrition by Dr. Iverson of Puyallup, Washington, a slide presentation of the Lake Geneva conference by Beverly Wold, and an account of the Hawaii conference by Fran Huntington of Portland, Oregon. The evening concluded with a big bonfire circle in the Clark pasture.

The Sunday morning worship service featured a meditation presented by Nathen Zadden and his group from Vancouver: "Fatherly and Brotherly Love—the Beautitudes." This was followed by a Q&A session that gave John Hales a workout!

The group adjourned to the Clarks' for a pot luck and horseback rides for the kids.

A decision was reached at the Sunday morning breakfast meeting to hold a Pacific Northwest Gathering of Students of The URANTIA Book at the University of British Columbia on July 28-30, 1979. Gordon Bellamy and Nathen Zadden were chosen as co-directors.

The University, Canada's largest, is a modern facility situated on the coast by Vancouver, a bustling city between the mountains and sea in a vacationer's paradise.

We have received the Mayor's personal welcome, and look forward to a delightful time at Canada's first regional conference □

Alaska



About sixty young and older attended the Fall Alaska Conference, October 7-8, about twenty-five miles outside Anchorage at rustic Mirror Lake.

Oklahoma City visitors presented multi-media shows—Berkeley Elliott and Tom Allen manning the machines and Van and Helen Butler providing back-up support. Their presentation, Jesus, God and Man is outstanding.

Other visitors from afar were Fran Huntington from Portland, and Renald Cyr from Blaine, Washington.

Under the direction of Barbara Maier, the meals prepared by the Alaskans were absolutely tremendous. The youthful enjoyed volleyball in the gym whenever there was free time—working off excess energy happily, in spite of the steady drizzle that blotted out the mountain scenery.

Tuckey Hayes was the genial and capable master of ceremonies.

In the evening, everyone sat around a big bonfire and sang until bedtime for the tired ones. The night owls went in for more discussion, until the wee hours. (continued on page 6)



Merlene Anderson, John Hales and Renald Cyr

(Petaluma), Michael John (Bodega), Lorrie Shapiro and Ellen, Chick, Kristin and John Montgomery (Los Angeles), and Dick, Cheryl, Christine and Laurel Prince (San Diego). Laurel, a 7-month-old lady with a keen sense of the fitness of things, decided her first URANTIA conference was the perfect place to cut her first four teeth!

The hard work of Marian, Peter, and David in planning and orchestrating the conference and of Jerry and Judy Personius in organizing the child care was evident and greatly appreciated.

Extra mention must be made of the Saunders, Dennis and Suzanne Shields (formerly of Los Angeles), Tony Johnson, Mary Holley (Hawaii), and Eva Sepp, Sue Smith and Geri Vincent (Oahu) for generous hospitality extended to those of us who capped off the conference with full-blown Hawaiian vacations.

The Pacific Conference was a successful first for Hawaii and hopefully will be followed by many more in coming years—providing further opportunities to enrich our spiritual lives in association with our brothers and sisters □

It was a time for inspiration and fellowship, and one to be remembered during the coming winter months—especially for those who live 200 miles east in the Alaskan mountains.

This was my first trip to Alaska, but it won't be my last. Getting to meet these new friends was a warm experience, another doorway into the Father's kingdom □

CANADIAN CONFERENCE INVITATION

October 15, 1978

Dear URANTIA Friends,

We are a group of fellow Agondonters on the west coast of North America in Vancouver, British Columbia. We recently met in Wenatchee, Washington, at the fall get-together, where it was overwhelmingly decided to have a conference in this area, in mid-summer '79.

The dates are July 28, 29, and 30, with an informal workshop on the 31st. We hope the conference will be memorable and of spiritual value to all sons of God, both seen and unseen.

If you feel you would like to participate or share any talents in putting this conference on, feel free to write to: Nathen Zadden, #104 - 8686 Centaurus Circle, Burnaby, B.C., Canada, Postal Code V3J 7K3.

Yours in loving service,

The Vancouver Study Group
jointly with The First URANTIA
Society of Wenatchee

One hilarious interlude began with the appearance of Vern Grimsley and Marvin Gawryn sporting robes and turbans and playing reasonable facimiles of sitar and tabla. Then entered the surprise honored guest...one Swami Vertabreaka who, after invoking a proper meditative attitude amazed the assembly with yogic contortions, including the frog lotus (see picture) and the incredible spine-twisting 360-degree pelvic twist, last attempted (unsuccessfully) in 1933 by the (late) great Swami Brohk Evrry Bhona. Upon his denouement, the "swami" was revealed to be Bob Blackstock (upper) and Terry McCade (nether.)

Not even an electrical storm and a near-by tornado dampened spirits for group singing, a hilarious "Ms. Universe" beauty pageant comically climaxed by the incongruent appearance of John Hales, David Kantor's moving multi-media presentations, and the lovely voices of Francyl Gawryn and Barbara Stump. On the final evening the San Francisco Bay Area URANTIA Society guided the entire assembly in a remembrance supper.

Despite a busy schedule, lots of unstructured hours were available for swimming in the warm Lake Geneva waters, boating, sunning, playing tennis and socializing.

A particularly interesting aspect of this conference, and one that holds much future promise, was the children's program, organized months in advance and superbly executed by Ruth Renn (a long-time reader from the Chicago area) and her committee. Classes were given in both the mornings and afternoons for children in the 4-7 and 8-13 age groups. They were taught by eight sets of volunteers from all over the country who prepared lessons, games, music and activities to co-ordinate with each day's spiritual theme. The program not only provided interesting things for the children to learn and do, but also allowed their parents freedom to enjoy the adult programs.

Bettina Gray worked with the older children each morning in group singing before their regular classes. On Thursday evening after dinner she and the children delighted the adults with a 35-minute musical presentation combining both singing and narration—all learned, rehearsed and perfect in four short morning sessions!

Nearly a year's effort went into this conference by the Planning and Expediting Committee, competently chaired by Carolyn Kendall. It was stimulating to attend a conference of such large scope and long duration. Certainly it was with reluctance that we departed on Friday morning □

TO THOSE WHO HAVE WAITED PATIENTLY:

Many of you have been wondering what happened to the Fall issue of the Agondonter. We simply did not print one this year. Thank you for waiting. And please be assured that you will be credited an additional issue for the one that was skipped. —ed.

P.S. The Agondonter could use a few \$100 donations.

BILL AND CORLIN WED

On December 17, Bill Sherwood and Corlin Remm were married in a lovely home wedding in Glendale. There were touches of the couple's creativity everywhere, including a beautiful tall Christmas tree with tiny white lights, pink velvet bows, crystals, and white doves. A candle-light ceremony, in which each person in the room had a small candle which was lit in a chain reaction from a single flame, symbolized the couple's desire to share their love with the world.

Until 1977, Corlin lived in the Chicago area, where she grew up in a family that had been studying The URANTIA Book since before she was born.

Bill recently became FUSLA's Education Chairman and has piloted several excellent monthly meetings.

JOHNSON-VINCENT WEDDING

James (J.J.) Johnson and Geri Vincent were married in Hawaii on January 19. Soon thereafter they visited with Julia and other Southern California readers, on their way to Saudi Arabia where J.J. has a new employment assignment. They hope to meet occasionally with Jeff and Pat Bedell there, (FUSLA members) who will be an hour's plane ride away.

NELSON-BARNES WEDDING

Andrea Nelson and Ken Barnes, active study group leaders in the Denver area, were married at noon on November 18, at the Congregational Church in Denver.

Approximately 200 guests attended the wedding, an estimated twenty to thirty of whom were URANTIA Book readers.

PERSONAL OUTREACH

Tucky Hayes and his wife, Pat, are mainstays of URANTIA Book study in Alaska. Tucky recently visited with Los Angeles readers, presenting an update of Alaskan activities at a gathering in Julia's home, and joining a large Study Group at the home of Kermit and Jackie Anderson in Orange County.

The most intriguing thing that came out of the recent Alaskan conference [see article, this issue] was that it stimulated two new study groups, Tucky reports. One at Soldetna, 120 miles south of Anchorage, involves three families, all in the same neighborhood. The other, 60 miles north at Palmer, is an offshoot of the Anchorage group.

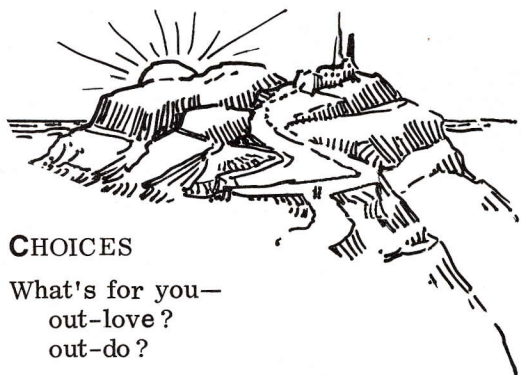
Tucky is pleased with these developments, noting that "most of us are anti-organization when we come to this Book, and are tentative in our outreach."

Julia agreed, and pleaded that we become broader in our personal outreach to others who may want to know about The URANTIA Book. "All through the Book," Julia pointed out, "we are told that this was meant for the whole world, for all races, all people."

CONFAB AT THE KEELERS'

In January, a group of about 45 people gathered at the home of Rich and Barrie Keeler in Rancho Santa Fe. Marvin Gawryn spoke on the teaching methods of Jesus, and led a participative type meeting. Francyl Gawryn sang, and led spirited group singing.

Rich and Barrie (formerly Barrie Achartz) were married last June 30. While not FUSLA members we consider them part of our family and are pleased to see such strong interest in the Book growing under their leadership.



CHOICES

What's for you—
out-love?
out-do?

Universe of world's apart
Chasm 'twixt the head 'n' heart
light to dark
(reading the clue)

Out-loving is the outting-do!

—Pam Katrenick
Phoenix, Oregon



Santa Rosa Study Group, with Bob Slagle in foreground

"Dear Aggie"

LETTERS TO THE AGONDONTER

About 1955 I was attracted to a leaflet on the counter of a small bookstore in Miami, entitled: "Excerpts from The URANTIA Book."

I was struck by its authoritative tone and exalting message. I sent for it immediately. Have been feeding from it ever since.

Having experienced the futility of introducing it to others by oral persuasion, I have resorted to putting the Book in five libraries. The point I wish to bring out is that "talking" the Book to seemingly interested persons is only meagerly successful—almost futile.

I feel that if the Book had been mentioned to me—recommended—I would have rejected it as just another religious writing. (Maybe in talking the Book I should be led by the Adjutant Mind Spirit of Wisdom!)

The Adondonter is such an entertaining and instructive publication. You show pictures of happy groups. I feel they have much reason to be so. We are so overwhelmingly rich to have a glimpse of Mansion World life and beyond.

And then the biggest news of all...that we can make Paradise (and beyond) if we truly, hungrily want to.

And I could praise the Heavenly Father through all eternity for the gift of a Creator Son, Christ Michael, to show us the way!

Joseph Caterina
St. Petersburg, Florida

J.C.: Your enthusiasm is inspiring. Library placement is a very important service—congratulations!
J.T.G.: What exciting news! (Keep us informed of new developments.) Sp4 M.C.: Maybe there's someone there whose T.A. wants you to share the Book with him. Or the Book itself can be a friend!

Love, *Aggie Donter*

BOOK PLACED IN PHILIPPINES

My daughter Lynn was in the Peace Corps in the Philippines, and two years ago my wife and I flew to Manila to visit her.

I carried a copy of The URANTIA Book, and left it.

When my daughter left there in September of 1977, I asked her to give the Book to a mutual friend (Filipino) in Manila.

I heard from him recently...the Book was so overwhelmingly received that he started a Study Group of about twenty people there and interest is growing.

Joseph T. Guardiani
Seymour, Connecticut

SOLDIER SEEKS PEN PAL

I'd like to have correspondence with readers of The URANTIA Book. I don't know how to make myself interesting enough for someone to write to me. I'm an ordinary egotist, isolated from Urantians, a spiritual degenerate many times.

I miss the closeness of fellowship with spiritual soldiers. The last three months I've opened the Book once and read two pages. Yet I've read the Book twice over, and know it's the greatest of all books. It lies on my table quietly, unused.

I was born and raised in the Philippines, and am now in the U.S. Army in Germany. I don't know what life is all about, but it's fun. It's nice to be on the planet.

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