

A Newsletter of the Urantia Book Society Los Angeles (www.ubla.org)

The Agondonter

"... evolutionary will creatures who can believe without seeing, persevere when isolated, and triumph over insuperable difficulties even when alone." The Urantia Book: Paper 50 Section 7; P579 - 81



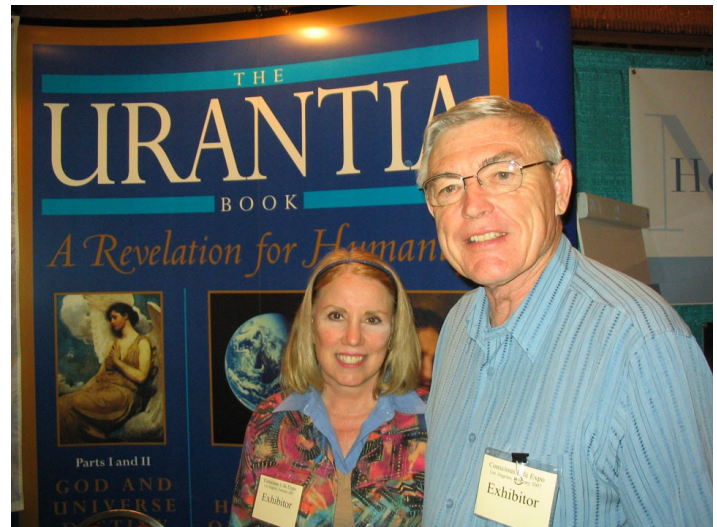
Spring 2007

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Commitment in Action: Conscious Life Expo 2007

Every year, Los Angeles hosts the Conscious Life Expo, a gathering of people focused on alternative health issues and different ideas about everything under the sun: food, healing, artwork, and even religion. UBLA has staffed a booth there for many years, inviting questions about the Urantia Book from attendees who are seeking what they can't find from traditional religions.

Larry and Donna Whelan have been the heart of this effort for the last six years. "Both of us have volunteered for various shifts and days in prior years," recalls Donna Whelan, "but we work together now." She goes on to explain that her passion for working the Expos has its roots in the way she found the Urantia book in 1993: at the Whole Life Expo in Pasadena. "So I've felt sort of indebted to those Urantians who introduced me to the Book," she concludes.



Donna and Larry at the Urantia booth

The Whelans talk to hundreds of people at the Expo every year, and the 2007 event on February 9-12 at the Los Angeles Airport Hilton was no exception. They gave everyone a copy of the Table of Contents with the web site where the Urantia Book could be read or downloaded for listening. They also sold twenty copies of The Urantia Book, fourteen copies of the Fellowship's "Life after Death" brochure, and eleven copies of The Urantia Book on DVD.

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Italian Extravaganza Planned For June 2

It's pasta time!

UBLA Special Events committee members Jennifer Stockland and Marlene Chicoine are busy putting together the social event of the season — an Italian Extravaganza that will take place on Saturday, June 2, beginning at 4 PM, at 7142 Rampart Lane in La Palma. A donation of \$20 per person is requested; children 6 and under get in free.

The fun begins with the food — Italian food, of course: main dishes, salads and desserts. Be sure to bring your appetite, and any of your friends who might want to attend!



Test your knowledge of Urantia Book trivia and you might win a prize; bid on items at the Silent Auction or enter the Super Raffle and you might get lucky again!

We'll have live music, singing and dancing, and loads of fun for kids and adults alike. Donations will be used to help support UBLA's outreach programs, so you can have a great evening and contribute to the spread of the Fifth Epochal Revelation at the same time.

All you need to do is RSVP to jstockland@dslextreme.com by Saturday, May 26th. Your donation will be collected at the door - just show up!

Questions about the Extravaganza? Call Jennifer at (949) 646-2876, or Marlene at (714) 761-0102. Silent Auction items are welcome.



Current UBLA Officers

<i>President</i>	Dianne Bishop	<i>Secretary</i>	Donna Whelan
<i>Vice President</i>	Fred Smith	<i>Treasurer</i>	Robert Burns
<i>Hospitality</i>	Stella Religa	<i>Book</i>	Larry Whelan
<i>Membership</i>	Richard Omura	<i>Education</i>	Kermit Anderson
<i>Publications</i>	Theresa Ransbottom	<i>Outreach</i>	Gerald Dalton
<i>Special Events</i>	Jennifer Stockland and Marlene Chicoine		

Sarmast Gives Expedition Update

It started eight years ago, with a mix of interests in archeology, Iran and the Urantia Book, particularly the account of the physical location of the first Garden of Eden. "I was a big time book freak and library user," Robert (aka Behz) Sarmast remembers. He devoured anything he could about Paradise, the Garden of Eden, and the lost city of Atlantis. Studying the eastern Mediterranean, he became convinced that the slender land bridge that stretched west to the place called Eden/Atlantis must be off the shore of his home country, Iran. The Island of Cyprus then became the terminus.



Sarmast began looking for maps of the sea floor. His astonishing discovery is familiar to most of us: the incredible 3D maps that show the sunken land bridge, the correlation of Plato's physical description of Atlantis with an actual landscape under the eastern Mediterranean. The news broke in 2003, and the story continues to fascinate people all over the globe, inspiring a television documentary, *Quest For Atlantis*, aired in 2006.



Sarmast talks to Captain Robert Bates (left)

The ongoing goal is to find evidence of human habitation, not an easy task since the land has been under water for nearly ten thousand years. A formation that could have been a wall turned out to be a natural arrangement. But the project continues, with Sarmast and his group planning ways to uncover further clues. One possible next step would be to take core samples of the site to study the area's geologic record and look for evidence of land life before the flood.

Sarmast's presentation covered the major finds in the first and second expeditions, including information from the side sonar scans. Fellow UBLA members peppered him with questions about technology, the animated maps on his website (<http://discoveryofatlantis.com/>), and future expeditions.

The list of contributors to this project is thick with Urantia Book readers, scientists and Atlantis historians. When asked how he reconciled the different approaches to his expeditions, Sarmast admits that he was very careful. It's a balancing act that the Master would approve, taking the best in what someone believes and building on it.

UBLA Elections

UBLA members went to the polls last November to elect a partial slate of officers. President Dianne Bishop continues in the second of her two-year term, and new Vice President Fred Smith brings the experience of having been UBLA's latest delegate to the Triennial Assembly last summer.

Donna Whelan is now the Secretary of our organization, and Robert Burns perseveres as our chief financial officer / Treasurer.

Stella Religa has taken on the chair position for the Hospitality Committee, and Jennifer Stockland and Marlene Chicoine are already hard at work on the ad hoc Special Events committee.

No one can replace Larry Whelan on the Book Committee, as you may have already read elsewhere in this newsletter. And Kermit Anderson is donating his time to find us great speakers for our meetings in his role as Education committee chair.

The International and Domestic Outreach committees have merged to form one unit, chaired by Gerald Dalton, who is working to establish study groups for Spanish-speaking readers in the Los Angeles area.

Richard Omura has stepped into position as chair of the Membership committee while continuing his website work for UBLA. Theresa Ransbottom is now officially chair of the Publications committee and invites you to submit materials for the Agondonter - articles, pictures, news on Urantia Book reader events - to her at tmrans@yahoo.com

Congratulations to all the new UBLA officers, and thanks also to those people whose hard work has helped to make UBLA a great organization.

Irene Sprunger Graduates

Urantia Book readers bid a temporary farewell to Irene Sprunger, who graduated from Urantia on February 27, 2007.

Irene was born July 5, 1916, in rural Ohio, and married her husband Meredith in 1940. She lived the teachings of Joshua ben Joseph in her own inimitable way, and together with Meredith, was recognized at IC 02 for a lifelong contribution to the Urantia Book movement.



Irene Sprunger, right, with her husband Meredith

“Any book that has the spiritual insights and truths of The Urantia Book deserves a thorough reading and evaluation by the thinking men and women of today. May you have the courage to read and study this great book.”

— Irene Sprunger





UBLA EVENTS COMING UP

Saturday, June 2, 2007, 7142 Rampart Lane, La Palma, 4 PM
Italian Extravaganza UBLA Fundraiser

Saturday, August 18, 2007, in Irvine, 5-9 PM
Jesus Birthday celebration with Robert Burns

Saturday, September 8, 2007, 6-9 PM at the Whittier Art Galley
Program meeting, speaker TBA

Saturday, November 17, 2007, 6-9 PM at the Whittier Art Gallery
Program meeting and UBLA elections

Program Meetings begin with a potluck at 6 PM. Please bring a salad, vegetable or dessert to share; UBLA provides an entrée and beverage.

Program meetings take place (unless otherwise noted) at the **Whittier Art Gallery, 8035 South Painter Avenue**. Please call Kermit Anderson, Education Committee chair, at (714) 894-5417 for more information on UBLA presentations. Or email kermita@earthlink.net



Study Groups in Southern California

- ◆ Arcadia - Lucille Kettell Weekly: Monday 7:30 PM (626) 447-1403
- ◆ Irvine - Robert Burns Weekly: Thursday 8 PM (949) 222-1053
- ◆ Long Beach - Doug Huntzinger Monthly: Call for next date (562) 633-2536
- ◆ Santa Barbara - Brendi Poppel Monthly: first Wednesday 7:30 PM (805) 884-6166
- ◆ South Bay - Dianne Bishop Call for date and time (310) 544-1715
- ◆ Ventura - Elisabeth / John Callahan Weekly: Friday 7 PM (805) 933-6650
- ◆ Westminster - Kermit / Jackie Anderson . Bimonthly: first & third Thursdays 7:30 PM . . (714) 894-5417
- ◆ Whittier - Stella Religa / Norman Ingram . Bimonthly: first & third Fridays 2 PM (562) 698-2122

Area Study Group Contact: Richard Omura (310) 306-9789

Please Note: UBLA has no official affiliation with any study group, nor does UBLA endorse or have any authority governing their curriculum or practices.

Commitment

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One of the Whelans' ice-breaking strategies for the Expo is to hand out Spiritual Vitamins, quotes from the Urantia Book printed on slips of paper and rolled into tiny scrolls about the size of a multiple vitamin. They are offered to conference attendees, who often stop to break them open and read the quotes.

"Read it, don't eat it," Larry explains to a passer-by. He seldom sits down, preferring instead to stand in front of the booth and offer Spiritual Vitamins from a small bowl. His energy and enthusiasm are infectious, and the exhibitors in the booth next door are soon deep in conversation with him.

When asked to choose the best thing that has ever happened at a UB booth, Donna Whelan can't decide:

"Many good things have happened. We get a chance to talk to people who are searching spiritually, and who are open to exploring the UB. It also gives us practice in stating and explaining what we believe in a succinct and summarized fashion. And it is always fun to exchange smiles with people and to share our joy."

Donna and Larry attribute the success of the booth to all the people who worked to set up and take down the display (loaned to UBLA for the occasion by The Fellowship), and to everyone who talked to those interested in hearing about the book.

Larry and Donna are both retired, Larry in 2001 as Battalion Chief for the County of Ventura Fire Department, and Donna in 2007 as a Licensed Marriage and Family Counselor.

Pato Banton Returns

It was time, he said, to continue his spiritual journey in another direction. Back to music and touring after seven years of humanitarian effort with at-risk youth in his hometown of Birmingham, England, Pato Banton and the Mystic Roots are spreading the good word.

It's as much a mission as a concert tour, what Banton himself describes as "sharing spiritual growth through music." The tunes are upbeat, the lyrics are positive, and the Urantia Book is at the heart of it. "The greatest way for a human being to serve God is through Loving Service to the Family of Humanity," he says on his MySpace website.



<http://www.myspace.com/patobanton>

As time and circumstance allow, Banton follows his concerts with a prayer circle outside the venue after the show. He also attends UB study groups wherever he is performing, whenever he can. Future SoCal dates include Santa Barbara - May 31; Irvine - June 1; West Hollywood - June 2; and San Diego - June 3.

For more information on Pato's outreach, contact Norman Ingram at norlastar@aol.com or (562) 698-2122.