



NEWSFLASH !

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A monthly News Bulletin from Urantia Foundation to IUA Officers, Foundation Office Managers, Coordinating Committee members, Foundation Representatives, and Translators for disseminating information to readers in local areas.

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Trustees and CCs Meet in Boulder

The Trustees and Coordinating Committee held their quarterly meeting in Boulder this month and took the opportunity to meet with the Boulder community of *Urantia Book* readers. Trustee, Mo Siegel, and his wife, Jennifer, kindly opened their home for a social evening on Thursday, July 16 where all known readers from the state of Colorado were invited. About sixty people attended. The Trustees and CCs held their meeting all day Friday at the Jesusonian Foundation office, and Friday evening another gathering of readers was held in a local church hall where the Trustees gave a presentation and answered questions.

On Saturday, the CCs officially had the "day off" while the Trustees continued to meet. One of the Boulder readers, John DeToy, kindly offered to show the group the sights of the Rocky Mountains. So with a van and a four-wheel drive, they headed off in convoy up to the mountain tops to enjoy the fresh mountain air at twelve thousand feet. After picnicking, walking, and relaxing on the tundra, they read the section in *The Urantia Book* on Diversion and Relaxation (p.1610). All experienced the benefit of getting away from the pressures of everyday life and of spending time in the hills with brothers, sisters, and the Father.

The following is an edited report of the meetings with the Boulder readers through the eyes of Lee Armstrong which fairly accurately sums up what took place:

I wanted to share a few perceptions of the meeting experience. Thursday evening, many members of the Boulder community came to Mo Siegel's house for a reception. All five Trustees were present and most members of the Coordinating Committee.

It was interesting to meet many new people. Most of the talk seemed to be apolitical, but there were a few discussions about issues here and there. I enjoyed meeting usual Foundation critic, Phil Geiger who I've known only from the internet. There is a light in his eyes, and I can safely call him my brother!

The drama of the reception came when Kristen Maaherra, who said she was going to boycott the meeting, made a late-hour appearance and handed out copies of her latest copyright-infringing CD "The Urantia Papers" to each of the Trustees and others.

Friday evening's town hall meeting was the event which will get the most publicity and be most remembered. The meeting occurred in the basement of a church. There was no air conditioning which emphasized the severe heat that the West has been experiencing. Two tables punctuated with a speaker's podium in the middle were at the front of the room. Last minute maneuvering among the Rocky Mountain Society of the Fellowship resulted in a panel of the most severe critics of the Foundation on one side with the Trustees on the other. With Phil Geiger, Kristen Maaherra, Eric Shaveland and Larry Mullins facing Richard, Georges, Kwan, Gard, Mo, and Tonia.

Each of the Trustees and Tonia gave introductory remarks. Richard had several good jokes as he usually does. Georges' remarks were direct, speaking of the problems of impatience. Kwan gave a

rousing talk on the Asian perspective which was filled with energy and enthusiasm for taking this revelation to the land of our Asian sisters and brothers. Gard spoke about his decision to leave the Executive Committee of the Fellowship and become a Trustee. Mo gave a good talk on the need for unity, sometimes looking down eyeball to eyeball with Larry Mullins who was directly next to him at the podium. Mo forcefully and clearly indicated that it is time to move beyond the discord. Tonia expressed the need for unity amidst the diversity of readers and gave some information on the work of the Foundation.

The program was then given over to Larry Mullins for a five-minute presentation representing the critic's panel. He criticized the presence of the Coordinating Committee as the Foundation's buying of support by filling the house with skills. He decried all of the "lies" the Foundation has made in obtaining the copyright. The only thing which I believe he was positive about was the fact that the Trustees showed up.

I sat in the front row in front of the critics. I wanted to look at their faces and into their eyes. Phil Geiger was quite serious. His tape recorder was on. Kristen Maaherra mostly took notes. Eric Shaveland was silent throughout the evening. Larry Mullins was next to the podium. His very stern countenance cracked only for a millisecond near the end of the session. But there was not much that pleased him.

The first part of the program was to be written questions presented to the Trustees. The second was to be live questions from the audience. One person commented how the evening seemed to build. I recall the first question as being Phil Geiger's on how the Foundation coined the term "Urantia" and "Urantian" for the trademark. Mo said that the word "coined" had legal implications and did not therefore wish to go into this.

The Trustees did a good job of answering the questions. I think the audience got a chance to feel like they were being heard. I think we were all tickled when Kwan indicated his puzzlement about why his Caucasian brothers seemed to have such a need to argue about everything. Why can't we just get on with the work? Gard had a pointed interchange with Kristen Maaherra where he quoted a phone call in which he was seeking to find out what could be done to resolve the issues. As I recall Gard's words, her response was that short of the Foundation giving up the copyright and trademarks she would see them in court. Kristen said she did not recall saying that.

The climactic moment came when Foundation Vice President, Georges Michelson-Dupont took the microphone and told Kristen that he wanted to publicly make the offer that if she submitted her new CD to the Foundation, and if it proved to be of high quality, that Urantia Foundation would take steps toward licensing her to distribute the material. The crowd hushed. You could see expressions of expectation on many of the audience members' faces as they turned in those awful seconds of silence as the attention shifted from Georges to Kristen. One reader shouted from across the room, "Take it, Kristen." Kristen reached for the microphone. She said she appreciated the sincerity of the Trustees, but that she could not accept because, in her eyes the copyright and trademarks of the book belong to God, and she recognizes no authority of Urantia Foundation to license her.

The Foundation has taken a lot of heat for not negotiating with Kristen. In actuality, there have been many discussions trying to resolve these issues. I think it became apparent to many members of the Boulder community that it takes two to negotiate. The fact that the Court of Appeals has upheld the copyright and ruled that she did infringe the copyright does not matter to her. She does not recognize the right of the courts to rule on this. For her, it is a matter of her own religious freedom; she refuses to answer to any but God. In my mind, I think Kristen was shown for what she is, intractable.

The consensus of the CC's I spoke with was that having the critics there actually worked to the Foundation's advantage. It showed two radically different ideologies. And when one side speaks of love, wants to work cooperatively and proactively on behalf of the revelation, and the other is filled with anger and blatant calls for self-rights, it's a clear contrast to all with an open mind.

The case was made on the need for unity. We must focus on the task and stop fighting in order to progress on translations and all of the needed tasks from library placement, to study groups, to sharing these teachings with the world. Most members of the Boulder community were wonderful. They are sisters and brothers who love this revelation and wish to let the past be past. I think we are beginning to see great dividends to the Trustees' efforts to move beyond the past and work cooperatively in the future. Who knows, we might even have gained enough support to develop a Colorado IUA!

The Hong Kong Book Fair

Volunteers, Dr. Robert Coenraads from Sydney, Australia and Ron Louie, who is second generation Chinese, from Vancouver, Canada, managed Urantia Foundation's booth at the Hong Kong Bookfair this month. While a comprehensive

report is still forthcoming, preliminary reports are very encouraging. Ron and Robert, on behalf of the Foundation, secured a distributor for the English *Urantia Book* that will distribute to Hong Kong, Shenzhen,

and Macao. This distributor has placed their first order for three hundred books.

Robert and Ron also made some comprehensive investigations into Chinese companies that deal with the translating, printing, and distributing of foreign works in China.

Ron developed an audio visual on a laptop computer which gave an overview of *The Urantia Book* in Chinese, with relevant visuals and Chinese music playing. This program ran continuously throughout the book fair and attracted the attention of passers by. Ron also produced an

introductory brochure in Chinese which was handed out extensively. Many showed a genuine interest in the book but the language barrier was an obvious hindrance to potential readers as they could not understand very much of what they read in the book.

With three Asian countries visited by the Foundation this year: Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong, and with the positive response from all countries, we feel that we have truly embarked on the challenging journey of introducing *The Urantia Book* to our Asian brothers and sisters.

Missouri-Kansas Urantia Association

Report by Cathy Jones

I am pleased to announce the inauguration of another local association of IUA for the USA – the Missouri-Kansas Urantia Association. The licensing was held at the home of Mike and Cindy Wood in Kansas and Trustee President, Richard Keeler and I attended. Many new friends were made and a wonderful weekend was shared by all.

The weekend began on Saturday the 11th with being welcomed at the airport by Mike Wood and his son Chris. Actually, Chris was an important link in the development of the new association. He had visited the Foundation while I was working there in May. I was in process of developing the Missouri association, but in talking with Chris, and delving further, I discovered that his mother and father had been founding members of their society in Kansas City, and now were unaffiliated. Of course, this led to my getting his dad's telephone number and calling him that night. Mike was surprised but overjoyed at being asked to be a part of the IUA.

Jerry and Carrie Prentice, and Jerry's sister Lynn, had already stepped up as leaders in Missouri. In talking with Mike, I recognized the power potential by

combining the two states, Missouri and Kansas. That led to the next step of putting the organization together. A licensing date was set and a membership invitational letter, an application letter, along with a copy of the IUA Charter and Bylaws and *Declaration of Trust* was sent out to people in the two states who had indicated some interest in the work of the Foundation. Responses came back. After conducting telephone interviews to explain the organization, answer questions relative to the two documents, and to discuss their experience in reading *The Urantia Book*, twenty two people were set for the chartering.

Trustee, Richard Keeler's arrival was just minutes after mine. It was interesting to Mike and Richard that they knew so many of the same people in the Urantia community since the 70's but their paths had not crossed. As in all Urantia meetings, the bonds of brotherhood were instantaneous. After checking in at the Holiday Inn, the three Prentices, Rhonda Sorter and Ellen Richardson from Missouri, and Seth Wood joined the four of us for the afternoon and into the late evening, just enjoying the

"Urantia experience." Being a nurse, Cindy, Mike's wife was pulling a night shift.

The scene for Sunday, the 12th, was set in a lovely one hundred-plus year old refurbished farm house, the home of Mike and Cindy and sons. At 11:00 a.m. brunch was laid out in the charming kitchen, the family gathering place. The replica of an old-fashioned wood stove (now gas), the master-crafted cabinets, and oak wood floors gave one the feeling of stepping back in history. I had no idea bagels, cheese, and sweet rolls came in so many varieties.

People trickled in, some driving long distances. Hoite Caston, former Trustee, drove in from Independence, Kansas, three hours away.

The licensing program started at 1:00 p.m. After Mike's welcome and a moment of quiet reflection, I extended greetings from the Coordinating Committee and congratulations and love from the IUAs world wide. With the flag-symbol hanging in the background, I explained the reason for the IUA. As partners with the Urantia Foundation, our mission is to disseminate the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Our simple organization is just a scaffolding for this dissemination. We are messengers. We are accepting the responsibility of living the teachings and helping to make the book available in all languages, to all corners of the world.

Hoite Caston spoke inspiringly about his introduction to *The Urantia Book* and shared some of the experiences of his Trusteeship.

Trustee President, Richard Keeler, then gave a glowing account of the many completed translations and awesome number now in progress. He expressed gratitude to the people who have stood by the Foundation through the previous tumultuous years and gave assurance that the Foundation is on course as to fulfilling its obligations to the *Declaration of Trust*.

The legal documents were then signed by the Foundation President, the IUA Administrator, and the President and Secretary of Missouri-Kansas Urantia Association. This document gives the association permission to use the trademarks on its stationary and newsletters, plus a tax-exempt affiliation with Urantia Foundation.

As each member present signed the charter, they introduced themselves and briefly related how the book came to them and the impact on their lives. Five Fellowship members were guests, also being invited to speak, if they desired, which they did. I extended an invitation for them to consider IUA membership, telling them that if, after reading the two documents, they were interested, I would be happy to meet with them privately and discuss their intent. Husband and wife, Alan and Lynn Borchert asked for membership and signed the charter, bringing the total to twenty four new members.

A beautiful buffet lunch was served, and the getting-to-know-you and "let's-get-together" sessions continued.

The day was spiritually fulfilling. One of the most impressive moments for me was when Mike and Cindy Wood and their two oldest sons signed the charter. In relating their experience with the book, Seth and Chris said the book was never forced on them. Their mom and dad manifested the values taught in *The Urantia Book*. There was always a book around and a study group every week. When the boys were old enough they just drifted into the group. As we were leaving, Matthew, the seven year old was curled up on the couch reading about what Jesus was doing when he was seven. My salute to this family and all those who are giving the world the next generation of leaders.

President- Mike Wood, Vice-President- Jerry Prentice, Secretary/Treasurer - Cindy Wood.