

# The BAHÁ'Í Connection

The Newsletter for the Bahá'ís of Southeastern Colorado

August 1991

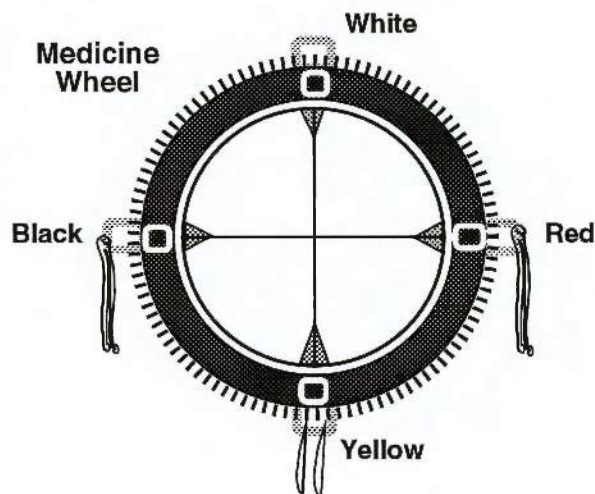


Mr. Don L. Coyhis, Guest Speaker

## ICPU to Hold First Public Meeting

Colorado Springs- AUG 13, The Institute to Create Patterns of Unity will have as guest speaker Mr. Don Coyhis at the Institute of Business, (The Old Garfield School) 332 Willamette.

Mr. Coyhis is a Stockbridge-Munsee Indian. He grew up on the Stockbridge-Munsee reservation in Wisconsin. He attended the University of Wisconsin. In 1976 Mr. Coyhis joined Digital Corporation where he developed and implemented training and support groups which have transformed the nature of the Digital organization. He is the co-founder of White Bison an organization dedicated to reducing alcoholism to 95% amongst youth on the reservation by the year 2000. The topic for the talk will be on "Using the Medicine Wheel for Healing and Unity". *continued page 2*



## CALENDAR of EVENTS

### Colorado Springs

Sunday, August 11, 12:00 Hillside Community Center Teaching Picnic Event

Tuesday, August 13, 7:30 Business Institute "Don Coyhis, Guest Speaker see article this newsletter

Saturday, August 17 6:00 Ostovar's home Fund Raiser

### Book Sales Library Schedule

Summer School, Monday Aug. 12 during Lunch hour only

District Convention

Masa'il Feast December 11

### El Paso County

Monday Aug. 19, Feast King's Home

### Manitou Springs

Sorry No Report

### Pueblo

Sorry No Report

### Parade Float Schedule

State Fair August 24

Fountain September 2nd

Arvada date not known as of press time

Assistance needed please call John Stevenson in Pueblo at (719) 544-9602

### Some Events for Everyone

August 13 Business Institute "Don Coyhis, Guest Speaker see article this newsletter

Summer Camp AUG 9-12

### Sunday Classes -- Colorado Springs

September 8 First class PPMHC topic Station of Bahá'u'lláh

September 15 No Class Gone to Glenwood Springs

September 22 Bahá'í Laws on Human Kind, Entities of a New Creation

September 29 Healing of Nations

### Firesides

Wednesday - Co. Spgs. Rickert 260-7732

Friday - Co. Spgs. Afnani 590-7049

Sunday - Co. Spgs. Ostovar 596-3966

Friday - El Paso Co. Rouhani 392-6472

**PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR EVENT CALENDAR FOR inclusion in the Next Issue Due August 20.**

## ICPU continued

There will also be an opportunity for individuals present to share ideas on ways that we can support one another's efforts to bring about racial harmony in the Colorado Springs area.

This event is open to the public and is free of charge. We would like to encourage an excellent attendance so come Tuesday, August 13th 7:30-9:30 at the Institute of Business "The Club" 332 E. Willamette Ave., Colorado Springs.

*The word of God is the king of words and its pervasive influence is incalculable. It hath ever dominated and will continue to dominate the realm of being. The Great Being saith: The Word is the master key for the whole world, inasmuch as through its potency the doors of the hearts of men, which in reality are the doors of heaven, are unlocked... It is an ocean inexhaustible in riches, comprehending all things. Every thing which can be perceived is but an emanation therefrom. Tablets of Bahá'u'llah p. 173*

## A PICNIC

but actually more than a picnic will be held at the **Hillside Community Center, Aug 11, 12 noon**

We would like those attending to get to know the folks in the community, so socializing is a **plus**

## **FUND RAISER.**

**The Ostovar's are hosting  
The food is great.**

**The hospitality is warm**

**Come share the**

**Fun**

**and Food!**

4745 South Carefree



**Saturday**

**AUGUST 17, 6:00pm**

Bringing lots of money

is wonderful,

but certainly *not necessary*.

## What is Esperanto?

### Take a few minutes and learn another language

Esperanto is an international second language created in 1887 by a Polish physician named Dr. Ludovic Zamenhof. He lived in an area of Poland which had four different linguistic and cultural groups, and he noticed the difficulties that they had in getting along with each other because of communication difficulties. Each group felt that its language was superior, and that the others should learn their language. (Americans and the French are also infamous for this attitude) This, naturally lead to some strife between the peoples, and a lot of misunderstandings. Bahá'ís have flirted with this unique language since its beginnings. As one of the basic tenets of the faith is the need for a universal auxiliary language for the unification of the world. Esperanto may become that language or it may not. English as well as a yet to be created language could fill that position.

Now, we know that simply solving the language problem will not suddenly eliminate wars, etc., but if we could just communicate a little better, we would be better able to work things out.

Esperanto does not attempt or intend to replace any national language, but simply offer an alternative means for peoples to communicate in a culturally neutral language. This language is also much easier to learn than any national language, and offers a richness and fullness that few national languages can match. It has NO EXCEPTIONS to its sixteen grammar rules (that's right---sixteen), so it is easy to learn, and the spelling is totally phonetic, as each letter has one and only one sound (compare that to English or French), so if you can say the word, you can spell it. Also, it is grammar coded, so you can always tell what part of speech and what part of the sentence a word is. It is spoken by over 15 Million people in the world, in almost every country (maybe not some of the little ones in Africa, but you know what I mean) including Taiwan and the Peoples Republic of China (where Esperanto enjoys great governmental support), Russia, Japan, Korea, Germany, France, Wales, England, and the rest of Europe and Asia, and even the island nations (the Philippines, Australia, for example) and many nations in the middle east and Africa.

Ok, enough hype...let's get down to business.

#### 1: Pronunciation.

Esperanto pronunciation is relatively simple, though there are some sounds that do not occur often in English (then of course, the TH sound we know and love does not occur in Japanese).

The Esperanto alphabet has 28 letters, most of which are pronounced like their English counterparts.

A as in father (ah...like the French La)

B as in english

C this is tricky...like ts, as in hot sun , but run together. Try it a couple of times ts ts ts you'll get the hang of it.

**TO BE continued in future issues of the Bahá'í Connection. A complete copy available from the Ed.**

Send self addressed stamped envelope plus .25 to Richard Stamats, 705 Drew Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80911



# Cultural Diversity and Unity within the Bahá'í Community (Maybe some clues as to why some become inactive)

## Unity, Diversity, and World Peace

The concept of unity with cultural diversity is a central theme in the Bahá'í Faith. The Writings urge us to foster and cherish cultural diversity, and the Guardian often referred to the "challenge" of the elimination of racial prejudice. The Universal House of Justice in its Peace Message placed this issue at the core of the search of world peace: in fact, the elimination of prejudice, in its many forms, is so important that it appears to be a prerequisite for the progress of humanity on virtually all fronts.

## Intercultural Relationships

In studies of intercultural relationships it has been found that it is most useful to think of these issues in terms of boundaries between groups of people who have distinct differences in the ways they think and live. Wherever there is a perception that there is a boundary, a "we" and a "they" there is an intercultural issue, even if only one partner in the relationship feels that such an ethnic difference exist. These boundaries exist everywhere: male/female, youth/adult, literate/illiterate, middle class/working class, urban/rural and native/non-native, to name a few. Each of these groups has a distinct ethnicity, a way of life which is, at least in part, unique to that group and different from others.

Members of an ethnic group interact quite differently with their fellow group than they do with others who are not seen as part of their group. The behavior across inter-group boundaries is often rigidly stereotyped and ritualistic -- only after much exposure and struggle does it become possible for people from different ethnic groups to interact easily and naturally with each other. It is a challenge we Bahá'ís must first learn to solve for ourselves.

## Within the Bahá'í Community

Within the Bahá'í Community we have an opportunity to put this challenge to the test. We have incredible variety of social groups and a great willingness among Bahá'ís to achieve even greater levels of harmony within our diversity.

In *The Advent of Divine Justice* (p18) the Guardian said "the elimination of prejudice should be a constant concern of ours." In a recent informal survey of a large number of Bahá'ís in the western provinces, it was found that 80% of the Bahá'ís contacted did not feel they were part of the organization. They felt that there was an "in" and an "out", and they felt themselves to be part of those who were "out". Again, a perception of a "we" and a "they", within the community which has the task of bringing unity to the world.

## A Focus for Growth and Development

This baggage we unavoidably bring with us into the Faith can, and is, being shed by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. We are a more diverse and more united collection of people than any other group of people on earth. We earnestly want to improve on this good thing we have going for ourselves. Understanding and improving cultural relationships is a large and complex issue. (This article may define some issues. The Ed.)

## Integration and Assimilation

Two words which often are used to describe intercultural relationships are Assimilation and Integration. These are two very different concepts:

**Assimilation:** takes place when two un-equally influential groups meet and the larger group absorbs the smaller group. The more powerful group tends to stay the same as it always has been, while the smaller, less powerful group changes. In some cases this involves a loss of identity of the smaller group. "The Melting Pot" process which is well known in the United States is essentially an assimilation of minorities by a larger and more powerful majority. The diversity and uniqueness of the many minorities are lost in assimilation type relationships.

**Integration:** takes place when two groups meet and both are changed by the encounter. The Oxford dictionary defines it as: "...complete by addition of parts: combine in a whole..." In integration all parties change, and in so doing all change some aspects of their identity in order to gain a higher form of unity. The ways and practices of each participant influences the functioning of the whole.

## Bahá'í Readiness for Change

Integration is what the Bahá'í Faith is all about. In order to become the "new race" spoken of by Bahá'u'lláh, we know that we must all change, rather than expect others to become like us. Most Bahá'ís know this and are willing to change -- if they knew how they would strive to do so.

*"...the root cause of prejudice is blind imitation of the past..."*

Selected Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá p247

*"If you meet those...different ... from yourself, do not mistrust them and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality..."*

Paris Talks, 'Abdu'l-Bahá p51-53

## The Tools of Perception and Knowledge: The Workings of the Mind-Cognitive and Affective Domains of Learning

Learning related to intercultural relationships is only partially a matter of acquiring new information. This "cognitive" domain is where intellectual knowledge rests. The most important learning related to intercultural issues is in the "affective" domain, the area of attitudes, values and feelings. There is an interesting reference to "feelings" in the Bahá'í Writings:

*"...had these people...sanctified their eyes, their ears*

*and their hearts from whatever they had seen, heard, and felt, they surely would not have been deprived of beholding the beauty of God." Kitab-i Iqan p14-15*

### **The Cognitive Process: The Tools of Perception**

The cognitive process, the mechanics of how the mind and awareness works, is not very well understood. What is known, however, is interesting. Apparently the senses deliver far more information than the mind can register. There is, therefore, a very elaborate and almost completely unconscious mental process which sifts, sorts, selects and in many cases distorts sensory input and attaches emotion to the information before it becomes consciousness. This is an almost instantaneous and automatic process without which we could not function.

Part of this elaborate process involves matching new input with previous experience. We understand and react to new information in terms of what has gone on before. We "pre-judge" information as we seek to understand it.

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Change of addresses should also be sent to the above address.

Contributions to offset publication costs and mailing should be sent to Mike Ard, 8145 Candleflower Circle, Colorado Springs, CO 80920. The cost of producing each newsletter is currently \$6.00 annually.

Some social scientists say it is as if we have a complex array of pictures in our head, and we try our best to match new experiences with these pictures. In the process we are largely oblivious of most of what our senses take in-if there is no picture similar to the new input, we often quite literally don't see it. If new input is only slightly similar to the pictures in our head, we'll change the new input as needed to make it conform to our previous experience. We see things the way we're used to seeing them, regardless of how they might appear to somebody else. This includes images of ourselves, who we believe we are and how we interact with the world. The process has been called stereotyping and is a natural part of human functioning.

It is very hard to change pictures in our heads which have built up over time. The process involved in changing these is similar to bereavement, where we suffer the loss of a cherished view of the world, and slowly become accustomed to a new way of seeing and feeling about things. Most would rather keep things the way they were rather than face emotional distress.

As we become Bahá'is, however, we undergo massive identity change. This is sometimes painful, and we sometimes avoid the pain by withdrawing, (by becoming inactive) in order to put off the changes that we have to make in our self-concepts and world view in order to bring our inner and outer being into conformity with the Will of Bahá'u'lláh.

These are some excerpts from "A Workshop on Minorities" created by the Association for Bahá'í Studies Conference at London, Ontario August 1986.

This article will continue in future newsletters. I would appreciate hearing if these or any articles such as these offer information that is helpful.

*Thanks, The Ed.*

The  
**BAHÁ'Í Connection**

705 Drew Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80911