

# The BAHÁ'Í Connection

The Newsletter for the Bahá'ís of Southeastern Colorado

September 1991



**Ulan -Ude south of Lake Baikal near Mongolian Border**

## **From Russia with Love!**

Alla'u' Abha In Chara (500+ miles northeast of Ulan-Ude) Today Doing Great! Very happy formed 2 assemblies about 50 new Bahai'is miss you! 3 more towns to go to pray for us. People mongolian descent 2 firesides 7 declarants + 8 very interested.

Love, Andishe Samandari

**Friday Evening 7:30 Sept 6, 1991  
Fireside/Deepening at Afnani's with  
Andishe Samandari will tell about her  
pioneering adventures in Russia.**

***All are welcome***

The next day Andishe will be leaving for 18 months of service to the World Center, Haifa.

With recent brief rise and fall of one form of the old World Order. This should be a fascinating evening!

## **Calendar of Events**

**DISTRICT CONVENTION  
Sunday, October 6, at UCCS  
Colorado Springs**

### **Colorado Springs**

Saturday, Sept 7, 7:15 Feast PPMHC, hosted by Ferdowsian Family

### **El Paso County**

Saturday, September 7, 7:00 Rouhani's Home  
Thursday, September 26, 7:00 Stamats' Home

### **Manitou Springs**

No report

### **Pueblo**

No report

### **Parade Float Schedule**

Fountain September 2, Morning

Arvada date not known as of press time

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

### **Some Events for Everyone**

Friday Evening 7:30 Sept 6, 1991

Fireside/Deepening at Afnani's with Andishe Samandari will tell about her pioneering adventures in Russia. **All are welcome! 7:30**

### **Firesides**

Wed - Co. Spgs. Rickert 260-7732

Friday - Co. Spgs. Afnani 590-7049

Sunday - Co. Spgs. Ostovar 596-3966

Friday - El Paso Co. Rouhani 392-6472

### **Bi-Election Results Colorado Springs**

Mike Gardner - Treasurer

Toni Goggans

Skip Caldwell



# ICPU first Public Event a **SUCCESS** in Content

Going to hear a talk one never knows whether or not he is going to come away with something more than he brought with him when he entered the door. This was one time I wondered if I had anything before I came. It was excellent.



Mr. Don Coyhis, a Native American, shared his recent experiences with men of wisdom at a public event hosted by the Institute to Create Patterns of Unity.

Mr. Coyhis who is not a Baha'i (I mention his not being a Baha'i only because you couldn't tell by listening to him) spoke about a recent event he attended where 40 Elders were asked to bring their power, wisdom and the wisdom they were raised with and address four issues. 1. What is it that we should know that can turn around the healing of the planet. What messages can we take to the scientific and political community to affect that change. 2. What is it we should be teaching our youth. 3. Asked them to do a ceremony for the healing of the people. 4. Asked them to do a ceremony for the healing of the mother earth.

Mr. Coyhis said "the experience would be about 12 steps above awesome. To be seated at the feet of this enormous wisdom emanating from these elders..." They did give us a lot of information about the laws to run the universe and the

system of harmonies. That these systems were made by our creator and that we can abide by them and get certain results or we may ignore them and get certain results.

One of the items that the Elders spoke about that started many a conversation was that about three weeks ago when the earth experienced a solar eclipse and the time to the next full moon was a window where we entered into a new place. During that period of the solar eclipse to the full moon a great stirring has taken place. That all the various tribal prophecies have been fulfilled. And that window brings us to the point where the healing is about to occur. After the full moon their will be gifts going around and that the people are ready to receive them. This time will be a time of conflict for some, it will be a reversal in their values and goals. The gifts will cause them to take new direction and that these people will act confused as the distribution of gifts is being taken on. The Elders also said that the gifts will go inside the person where an accelerated healing will take place on a scale beyond what humans think is possible. The Elders have known this information for a long time and now feel that the people are ready to be aware. Mr. Coyhis continued explaining the Medicine Wheel and its ancient use as it describes the harmonies of life. The Medicine Wheel is not limited to only one use, sometimes it can represent the four directions of north, east, etc. or the emotions or it can be used to describe the stages of maturity. Because of its circular shape it also describes the interconnectedness and unity of all these varied meanings. The Medicine Wheels also describes symbolically the races of man and the connected relation to all mankind. That the strength of the Wheel is in the differences found in each of its sides.

He continued to present the wheel can as a tool to aid people to heal. The wheel has a center and that represents the internal focus or that it is what is inside of institutions, groups and people that must change.

An interesting footnote was Mr. Coyhis's admiration for the words of another Indian in different hemisphere, Gandhi "**You must be the change you wish to see in the world.**" Another of the gems presented was that we become what we think about. He spoke of red, black, yellow and white having common visions of unity but must honor differences. This evening presented wonderful examples of a new, yet ancient imagery, that as Baha'is we knew Mr. Coyhis was speaking to truths which are familiar to many Baha'is. To hear someone else talk of their culture and Baha'is understanding the coexistent parallels of truth certainly reaffirms certainty.

In addition several people attended the evening and signed their names to ICPU mailing list.





## **The Most Challenging Issue Part II.**

### **Early Childhood Education and "Blind Imitation of the Past"**

We acquire the foundation of our largely unconscious and invisible cognitive system, the "pictures in our head", very early in life. A two-year-old already shows personality traits which will form the basis of her adult personality. This includes awareness of appropriate male and female roles, what is right and wrong, the use of language (sometimes several), and so forth.

We acquire most of this incredibly complex set of invisible rules in the first 5 years of life, and learn virtually all of it from interacting with the world around us in the ordinary tasks of daily living in the home. Some say we learn about half of our total life's accumulation of knowledge during this period. These powerful but largely unconscious impressions form the basis of how we think things ought to be. As we go through life we quite literally are blindly imitating the past -- the ways of the Old World Order which have been passed on from one generation to the next in early childhood form the largely unconscious and invisible foundation of our cognitive system. These are the mental tools we must use as we strive to build the New World Order.

### **Seeing Our "Shell of Conventionality" (and Prejudices)**

As noted above, we're encouraged by Abdu'l-Baha to not withdraw ourselves into our shell of conventionality when we meet somebody who is different from ourselves. These conventions, or norms, define for us what is proper behavior. We learn these in early childhood, and they form the largely-invisible foundation of our cognitive processes. There are many examples of these rules: not crossing our legs when we pray, not talking with your mouth full, facing the audience when we address it, and others. When these conventions are broken, people tend to withdraw, or otherwise put some distance between themselves and the violator of these norms. This rejection is often accompanied by negative emotions which are produced when these unconscious but very powerful rules are perceived to be broken.

### **What are we thinking**

#### **1. The form of Baha'i Administration and Events**

The conduct of Feast, Assembly meetings, Holy Days, and many other events usually reflect the unconscious cultural norms of those who organize these events. Many who are not in administrative roles have no part in shaping the form of Baha'i community activity. As such, the people whose ways of life differ from those in charge often feel as if events do not meet their needs - they might eventually stop coming to events where they don't

feel at home. This is sometimes called "becoming inactive".

#### **2. Thinking Clearly and Logically: The Clash of Cognitive Styles**

One of the unconsciously held signs of competence among male Baha'is of European descent (or education), which is a large number of those in the administration, is the ability to think clearly and logically, and to get straight to the point when discussing something. This is known as linear thinking, and is one of the strengths of this sector of the Baha'i community and of western industrialized society as a whole.

There are people in other sectors, however, who think differently. These sectors, such as women, native people, and others from groups such as the working class from European-descent, often have intuitive, circular or wholistic way of thinking and expressing themselves. They think like the spokes of a wheel, with the important notion in the center, and a whole array of ideas all around this central point. Some call this a "random access mind", this pattern of thought often senses and wants to explore relationships among elements which are seen as irrelevant by linear thinkers, whose primary purpose is to come to some sort of conclusion as quickly and efficiently as possible.

What usually happens is that the forceful and confident linear thinkers gets his way and circular or wholistic thinkers feel their ideas were not given enough time to formulate themselves into an opinion which adequately expressed the picture they wanted to convey. This sometimes breeds a sense of alienation among the non-linear thinkers and can result in estrangement within the community. (It also fuels interesting discussions in the domestic environment as well)

#### **3. Believing the Myth of Inferiority: "Internalizing the Oppressor"**

People from traditionally dominated sectors of our community (that's most of us) have spent most of their early formative years in an environment where they were being told by the wider society (often indirectly) that they were inherently inferior. This applies to women, blacks, native peoples, most immigrants, and others. Unfortunately, many of these people have believed these myths at some point in their lives, and some have low levels of self-esteem as a result. One manifestation of this sense of inferiority is a lack of willingness to elect their own people to office in the Baha'i community .. they are not perceived as being competent enough for the job. This is, however, changing, and these people are gaining a truer sense of their nobility. As they become more confident of their inherent worth, they become more comfortable in making their unique and varied contributions to Baha'i community life

#### **4. Reactions to Paternalism**

As the traditionally dominated sectors of the population become more aware of prejudices, they

become very quick to react to any indication that they are being treated in a paternalistic manner by members of the traditional dominator class (this includes many of our senior administrators). Many of these senior administrators quite unconsciously demonstrate a great number of these paternalistic traits, and drive the emerging members of the oppressed classes wild with frustration. This is probably one of the factors involved in the "non-activity" seen among native people and others.

### 5. Western Male Cultural Traits

Some of the cultural traits of the Western male members of our community (and those who have been educated in Western schools regardless of their ethnic origin) are as follows:

a> a very low tolerance for ambiguity - we always like to know what is going on. When we don't know what is happening we are often uncomfortable, and assume the worst;

b> a high level of readiness to take the initiative we're not shy about starting things (like conversations, projects, decision-making);

c> an understated but very strong competitiveness which is rarely overtly expressed, but pervades almost all communication, especially with other men;

d> a very high sense of responsibility for making sure things work out right (by our standards of what is "right");

e> a desire to be in control of things - we're accustomed to being in charge and don't much like it when we are not (it hard for us to be in the learner role);

f> a sense of pride in being a good judge of character, and making quick and firm assumptions about the competence of others;

g> a great desire to be everybody's friend - something which may be difficult to accomplish considering the other traits noted above.

These traits often combine to produce and convey a sense of superiority and the paternalism spoken of so clearly by Shoghi Effendi and later by Ruhiiyyih Khanum as one of the major difficulties to overcome in achieving unity and intergration in the Baha'i community and hence in the world at large.

**Part III in the next issue will conclude this article with some tips on how we can change the negative factors.**

As always I like some feedback about the value of these articles.

**The Bahá'í Connection** is published monthly by the Local Spiritual Assembly of Colorado Springs, 5690 Del Paz, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Information for publication only should be sent to Richard or Maria Stamats, 705 Drew Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80911 or call (719) 392-6472 on or preferably before the 20th of each month.

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

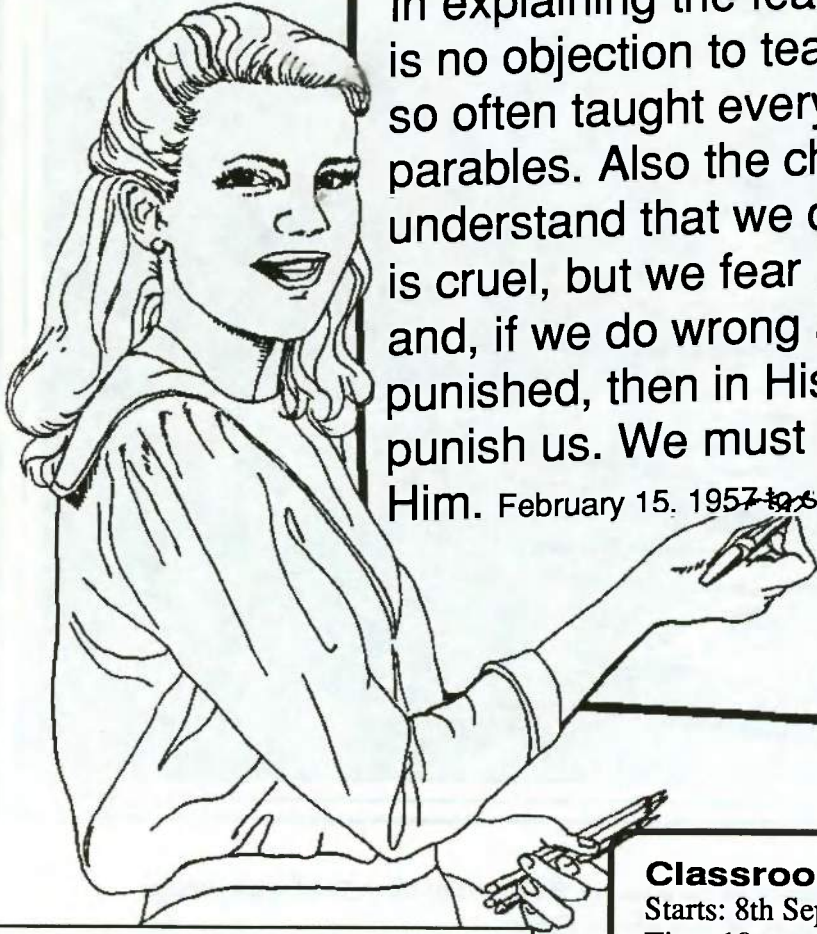
**Contributions to offset publication costs and mailing should be sent to Michael Gardner, 528 West Bijou, Colorado Springs, CO 80905. The cost of producing each newsletter is currently \$6.00 annually.**

The  
**BAHÁ'Í Connection**

705 Drew Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80911



# Bahá'í Sunday Classes



In explaining the fear of God to children, there is no objection to teaching it as 'Abdu'l-Bahá so often taught everything, in the form of parables. Also the child should be made to understand that we don't fear God because He is cruel, but we fear Him because He is just, and, if we do wrong and deserve to be punished, then in His justice He may see fit to punish us. We must both love God and fear Him. February 15, 1957 to some individual believers

## Ways to Encourage good Behaviour

1. Be loving with your children.
2. Praise and encourage your children.
3. Give good counsel to your children.
4. Use consultation with your children.
5. Listen to and talk with your children.
6. Try to understand your children's feelings.
7. Give rewards to your children sometimes.
8. Teach good habits to your children.
9. Find good friends for your children.

## Use Good Punishments

1. Correct a child kindly and firmly.
2. Use reasons and explain punishments to your child.
3. Talk with your child when he does something wrong.
4. Take away rewards as a punishment to your child.

## Classroom Schedule for Children Classes

Starts: 8th September 1991 PPMHC

Time: 10 a.m. - 12:00 noon

### Age Group

1-3 years  
4, 5, 6, 7 years  
2nd 3rd 4th grade  
5th and 6th grade  
Junior High

### Teachers

Georgia Woodworth  
Jeanne Hornor and Fereshteh-Sabet  
Jane Mapson and Pari Samandari  
Fariba Ferdowsian and Joan Labib  
Soheila Afnani

*Prepared by the Education Committee of Colorado Springs*

## Do Not Use Bad Punishments

1. Do not beat your child.
2. Do not vilify your child.
3. Do not lie or make false promises to your child.
4. Do not use fear to punish your child.
5. Do not make punishment too harsh.

Have for children an abundant love.  
When children feel loved, they want to please you and behave well.



"Immerse  
yourselves  
in the ocean  
of  
My words,  
that ye may  
unravel its  
secrets, and  
discover all  
the pearls  
of wisdom  
that lie hid  
in its  
depths"

Bahá'u'lláh



*You are cordially invited to immerse yourself in the ocean of His words at these Sunday deepenings.  
Pikes Peak Mental Health Center  
175 W. Moreno Ave. Colorado Springs, CO  
10:00 am - 12:00 pm Sundays*

- Sept 8 Station of Bahá'u'lláh- Muin Afnani**  
*Sept. 15 No Class Glenwood Springs*  
**Sept. 22 Baha'i Laws and the Status of Human Kind**  
**(Entities Of A New Creation) presented by Dennis Green**  
**Sept. 29 Healing of the Nations, presented by Stephanie Troxel**  
**Oct. 13 To be announced- Auxiliary Board Member, Carl Ewing**  
*Oct. 20 No Class Convention*  
**Oct. 27 Vision of Unity- Firuz & Joan Labib**  
**Nov. 3 The Most Great Challenge- Auxiliary Board Member, Carol Brooks**  
**Nov 10 Christianity/Baha'i Faith the first 150 years- Duane Troxel**  
**Nov. 17 Islam and the Baha'i Era, the first 150 years**  
**Nov. 24 Recap Discussion**

Prepared by the Deepening Committee of Colorado Springs