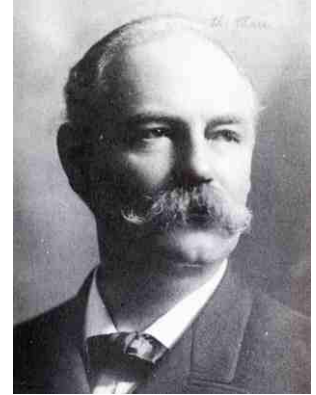


### A Visit to Thornton Chase Gravesite



THORNTON CHASE

OCTOBER 2004

## Existence in Degrees

6 July 1912 Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York, Notes by Emma C. Melick

In the world of existence man has traversed successive degrees until he has attained the human kingdom. In each degree of his progression he has developed capacity for advancement to the next station and condition. While in the kingdom of the mineral he was attaining the capacity for promotion into the degree of the vegetable. In the kingdom of the vegetable he underwent preparation for the world of the animal, and from thence he has come onward to the human degree, or kingdom.

Throughout this journey of progression he has ever and always been potentially man.

In the beginning of his human life man was embryonic in the world of the matrix. There he received capacity and endowment for the reality of human existence. The forces and powers necessary for this world were bestowed upon him in that limited condition. In this world he needed eyes; he received them potentially in the other. He needed ears; he obtained them there in readiness and preparation for his new existence. The powers requisite in this world were conferred upon him in the world of the matrix so that when he entered this realm of real existence he not only possessed all necessary functions and powers but found provision for his material sustenance awaiting him.

Therefore, in this world he must prepare himself for the life beyond. That which he needs in the world of the Kingdom must be obtained here. Just as he prepared himself in the world of the matrix by acquiring forces necessary in this sphere of

The stout-hearted Thornton Chase, surnamed Thabit (Steadfast) by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and designated by Him "the first American believer," who became a convert to the Faith in 1894, Thornton Chase, the first Western Christian to embrace the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

(Adib Taherzadeh, *The Child of the Covenant*)

As 'Abdu'l-Bahá crossed America from east to west in 1912, Thornton Chase lay on his death-bed, and when the Master reached the shores of the Pacific, Chase was dead. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá learned of his death in San Francisco, and a fortnight later stood at the graveside of this steadfast disciple in Inglewood Cemetery, Los Angeles, He said:

"This revered personage was the first Bahá'í in America. He served the Cause faithfully and his services will ever be remembered throughout future ages and cycles . . . For the present his worth is not known, but in the future it will be inestimably dear. His sun will ever be shining, his star will ever bestow the light. The people will honor this grave. Therefore, the friends of God must visit this grave and on my behalf bring flowers and seek the sublimity of the spiritual station for him . . .

This personage will not be forgotten" H. M. Balyuzi: *Abdu'l-Bahá--The Centre of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh* pg 66



Demolition underway...the House of Mirza Abbas Nuri (also known as Mirza Buzurg), Tehran, Iran, June 2004.

## BAHA'IS LAUNCH CAMPAIGN AGAINST ALLEGED IRANIAN ABUSES

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States asserts in an advertisement in the 12 September edition of "**The New York Times**" that the Iranian government has persecuted the 300,000 members of the religious minority over the last quarter century, the Baha'i World News Service reported (<http://www.bwns.org/story.cfm?storyid=323>; for the advertisement see <http://www.bahai.org/pdf/ad20040912.pdf>). The advertisement compares the Iranian theocracy's actions with those of the Taliban when that movement destroyed the famous Bamyán Buddhas in Afghanistan. The advertisement cites the destruction in June of the historic Tehran home of Mirza Abbas Nuri, father of the founder of the Baha'i faith, Mirza Hussein Ali Nuri or Baháullah, as

Continued page 3

continued next page...

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# Colorado Springs

## Bahá'í Center

Directions to Bahá'í Center:  
1622 Rainier Drive. NE corner of Circle and Arlington. Turn east on Arlington, off of Circle Drive. It is one block north of Monterey or 1 mile south of Fountain Blvd.

## SUNDAYS Bahá'í Center

- Devotions 10-10:30 AM
- Classes for all ages, 10:30-11:30
- Potluck refreshments

## FEASTS Bahá'í Center

Arrival time is **7:15 PM**. The program begins promptly at **7:30 PM**.

'Ilm Friday, Sept. 15

**Host:** David Barnes

Qudrat Wednesday, November 3

**Host:** Faranak & Navid Rahimpour

**Public Fireside:** - Bahá'í Center

Saturday, October 9, 7:15 PM

## BIRTH OF THE BÁB:

Tuesday, October 19, 7:15 PM

**Program:** Groetzinger family and Cheryl Boyd

**Refreshments:** Sirius Rouhani family

**Elist:** for email info on events in Cluster 13: Jcole67531@aol.com



The grounds, flowers and care of the Gravesite show the love of the friends for Thornton Chase

This September 28, 2004 will mark the 92nd Annual Thornton Chase Memorial Service at 2 p.m. at the Inglewood Cemetery.

The first American Bahá'í passed away at his home in Los Angeles 1912 laid to rest Inglewood Cemetery

Thornton Chase, who rose to such heights, was in the employment of a well-known life insurance company. In the Middle West, where he learned of the Faith and accepted it, he gave so much of his time to the service of the Cause that his company deemed it advisable to transfer him to a distant region. He was sent to California, but his dedication to the Faith, far from slackening, grew more intense. Duties devolving upon him in the pursuit of his profession took him from city to city, and wherever he went he taught and served the Cause, not only by speech and dissertation, but even more validly, by the radiance of his person. A secretary in an office which he had to visit from time to time, spoke in later years of the electrifying presence of Thornton Chase. She recalled that whenever he came into the room, people felt elated; joy wafted in with him; his face radiated light. Thornton Chase once wrote that he, himself, was a man re-created.

H. M. Balyuzi: Abdu'l-Bahá--  
*The Centre of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh*

Existence from page 1

existence, so, likewise, the indispensable forces of the divine existence must be potentially attained in this world.

What is he in need of in the Kingdom which transcends the life and limitation of this mortal sphere? That world beyond is a world of sanctity and radiance; therefore, it is necessary that in this world he should acquire these divine attributes. In that world there is need of spirituality, faith, assurance, the knowledge and love of God. These he must attain in this world so that after his ascension from the earthly to the

Continued on page 4

## Bahá'í Connection

**Contributions** to offset publication costs and mailing should be sent to Larry Barnes, 5690 Del Paz Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. The cost of producing each newsletter is currently \$8.00 per year.

### Submissions

If you wish to have the Bahá'í Connection run an article or advertise for your event please submit as soon as possible. The Bahá'í Connection is finished on the 21st of each month that means that regular type is received up to the 20th. If you want a special design connected with an event please send it so that it is received by the 14th.

Articles are edited for size, clarity and relative value to the readers. Photographs and artwork are encouraged, however it is best to avoid having us return the illustrations.

**All items for the Bahá'í Connection can be sent to:**

Richard Stamats  
705 Drew Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80911  
(719) 391-2541  
FAX- (719) 391-2541 \*51  
rstamats@email.com

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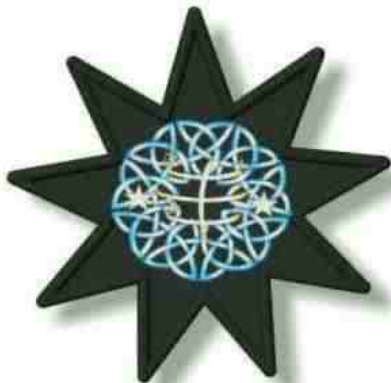
The Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'i's of Colorado Springs,  
5690 Del Paz Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

**Please send all address changes to assembly address.**

### Colorado Springs

LSA of Colorado Springs  
Secretary Judi Barnes  
(719) 598-4806  
csbahai@gbronline.com

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Iran from page 1

the Iranian government's most recent action against the minority. A 13 September press release from the Baha'i community notes that earlier this year the Iranian authorities destroyed the gravesite in Babol of Mullah Mohammad-Ali Barfurushi, a prominent Baha'i known as Quddus. Bani Dugal, a Bahai representative, described these developments as "part of a concerted plan on the part of the Iranian government to gradually extinguish the Baha'i faith as a cultural force and cohesive entity." BS

**Baha'is decry cultural cleansing in Iran**

NEW YORK, United States, 12 September 2004 (BWNS) -- The destruction of yet another Baha'i holy place in Iran has prompted an outcry by Baha'is around the world, who see that the Iranian Government is persisting in a campaign of persecution so extreme in the fanaticism driving it that it even jeopardizes invaluable assets of the country's cultural heritage.

The demolition in June of an historic house in Tehran, which followed the leveling of a Baha'i holy place in Babol earlier this year, has spurred national Baha'i communities in several nations to place a statement in major newspapers decrying the destruction.

The statement, which ran in the New York Times today, is set to run soon in newspapers in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

The Baha'i community of Iran, with about 300,000 members, is that country's largest religious minority.

With some five million members in more than 180 countries worldwide, the Baha'i Faith is an independent religion that promotes such teachings as the oneness of humanity, the underlying unity of the religions, the equality of women and men, and the need to eliminate prejudice.

Since 1979, despite their peaceful character, more than 200 Iranian Baha'is have been killed, and hundreds more have been tortured and imprisoned. Tens of thousands have lost jobs, pensions, and access to

# UNIT 115 CONVENTION

when

# SUNDAY OCTOBER 3 2004

starts

# 9:00am

located at

# ADAMS STATE COLLEGE ALAMOSA COLORADO

education, all solely because the clerics who rule Iran declare them heretics.

"The hatred of the extremist mullahs for the Baha'is is such that they, like the Taliban of Afghanistan who destroyed the towering Buddhist sculptures at Bamiyan, intend not only to eradicate the religion, but even to erase all traces of its existence in the country of its birth," says the statement, which took the form of a paid advertisement in the New York Times.

The house that was destroyed in June had been owned by Mirza Abbas Nuri (also known as Mirza Buzurg), the father of Baha'u'llah, Who founded the Baha'i Faith. Mirza Abbas Nuri was an eminent provincial governor and was widely regarded as one of Iran's greatest calligraphers.

The statement in the Times notes that Mirza Abbas Nuri's house was an "historical monument, a precious example of Islamic-Iranian architecture, 'a matchless model of art, spirituality, and architecture.'"

"In their determination to rid Iran of the Baha'i community and obliterate its very memory, the fundamentalists in power are prepared even to destroy the cultural heritage of their own country, which they appear not to realize they hold in trust for humankind," the statement continues.



Historic photograph of the entrance to the House of Mirza Abbas Nuri (Mirza Buzurg), Tehran.

# CONVENTION

*The Baha'is of Electoral Unit 115 are urged to attend the Convention to elect our Delegate to the National Convention and to consult about the actions we must undertake to fulfill the challenging goals given us by the Universal House of Justice and the National Spiritual Assembly*

**Sunday, October 3, 2004**

**8:30 AM to 10:00 AM Registration**

**10:00 AM to Noon Election of Delegate**

**Noon to 1:05 PM Lunch (on your own)**

**1:15 PM to approximately 2:30 PM Consultation**

**Adams State College**

**College Center (Corner of First Street and Stadium Avenue)**

**Alamosa CO**

Activities are planned for the children and youth during the Convention meeting times. Lots to do in the San Luis Valley. If you come Saturday, visit the Great Sand Dunes National Monument and join a social gathering of the Friends afterward (6pm to 10pm) at the Great Sand Dunes Swimming Pool (hot springs 24 miles north on CO 17).

**If you do not plan to attend Convention, please be sure to mail your ballot to**

Colorado Springs Baha'i Assembly,  
5690 Del Paz Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

**If you need help contact**

Colorado Springs Baha'i Center, 719-532-9907

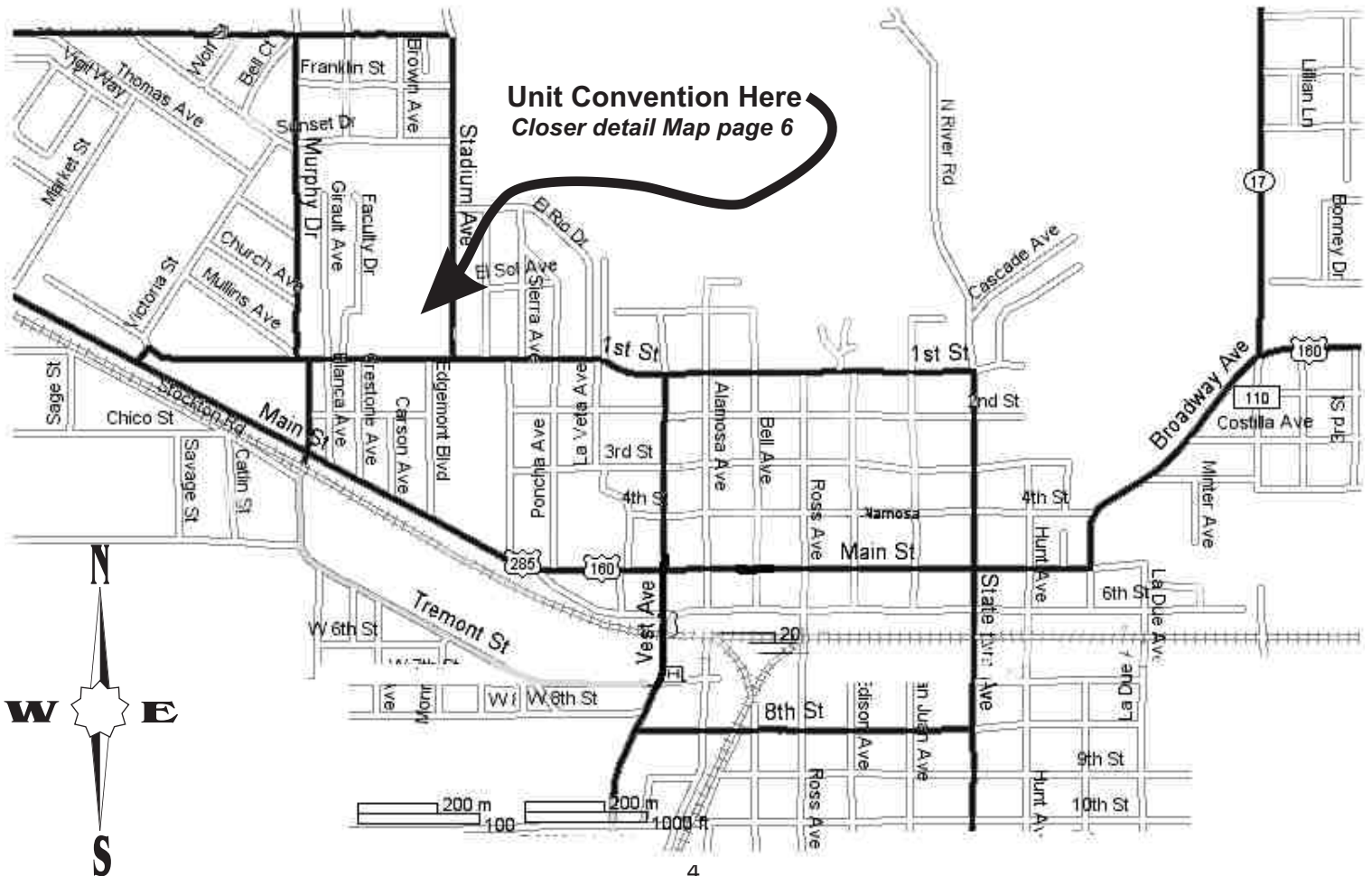
Existence from page 2

heavenly Kingdom he shall find all that is needful in that eternal life ready for him.

That divine world is manifestly a world of lights; therefore, man has need of illumination here. That is a world of love; the love of God is essential. It is a world of perfections; virtues, or perfections, must be acquired. That world is vivified by the breaths of the Holy Spirit; in this world we must seek them. That is the Kingdom of everlasting life; it must be attained during this vanishing existence.

By what means can man acquire these things? How shall he obtain these merciful gifts and powers? First, through the knowledge of God. Second, through the love of God. Third, through faith. Fourth, through philanthropic deeds. Fifth, through self-sacrifice. Sixth, through severance from this world. Seventh, through sanctity and holiness. Unless he acquires these forces and attains to these requirements, he will surely be deprived of the life that is eternal. But if he possesses the

Continued on page 7





### Iran from page 3

"Surely the time has come for Iranians everywhere to raise their voices in protest against such willful desecrations," concludes the statement.

Placing the statement in newspapers around the world is part of a coordinated effort by Baha'is outside of Iran to call the world's attention to the destruction of cultural landmarks that are part of the heritage of the entire world, said Glen Fullmer, director of communications for the Baha'i community of the United States.

"The places that are being demolished are significant to all humanity," said Mr. Fullmer. "They reflect unique elements of Iran's cultural history. So we are calling on Iranians around the world to protest the destruction of their own culture."

The statement will also be printed in one of France's premier newspapers, said Brenda Abrar, a spokesperson for the Baha'i community there.

"There are a great many Iranians in France," said Ms. Abrar. "We want to alert them that their own cultural heritage is in danger. The house that was demolished in June actually represents a great work of Islamic architecture."

In July, the Iranian newspaper Hamshahri published a lengthy article about the life of Mirza Abbas Nuri and the architecture of his house.



Destruction of cultural heritage...interior of the House of Mirza Abbas Nuri (Mirza Buzurg) during demolition, Tehran, June 2004.

"As he had good taste for the arts and for beauty, he designed his own house in such a style that it became known as one of the most beautiful houses of that period," wrote Iman

Mihdzadieh in Hamshahri on 13 July. "The plasterwork and the tile-work in the rooms as well as the verdant veranda, the courtyard with its central pool, and the trees planted in the flowerbeds, all created a tranquil atmosphere in this house."

The house was demolished over a period of about one week in June. The demolition order was issued in April by Ayatollah Kani, director of the Marvi School and the Endowments Office, ostensibly for the purpose of creating an Islamic cemetery. When the demolition started on 20 June, officials from the Ministry of Information were present, and by 29 June more than 70 percent of the structure had been destroyed. [See photographs]

The destruction of Mirza Abbas Nuri's house represents just the latest in a series of demolitions that appears to be aimed at systematically destroying Baha'i holy sites, said Bani Dugal, principal representative of the Baha'i International Community to the United Nations.

In April, despite international protest, the gravesite of an early apostle of the Faith was destroyed in Babol. The house-like structure marked the resting place of Mulla Muhammad-Ali Barfurushi, known as Quddus.



Gravesite of Quddus, an early apostle of the Baha'i Faith, during its demolition, Babol, Iran, April 2004.

Quddus was the foremost disciple of the Bab, the Prophet-Herald of the Baha'i Faith.

In 1993, more than 15,000 graves were bulldozed at the well-kept Baha'i cemetery of Tehran on the pretext of constructing a municipal center.

In 1979, shortly after the Islamic

revolution, the house of the Bab in Shiraz, one of the most sacred sites in



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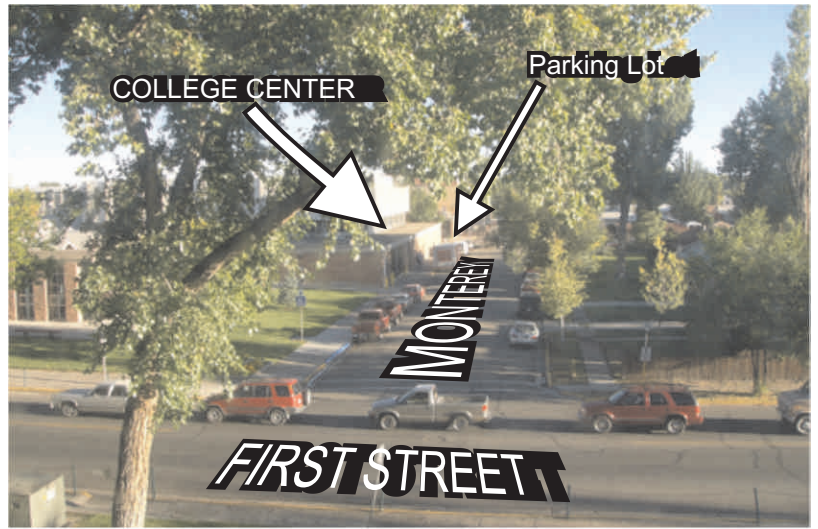
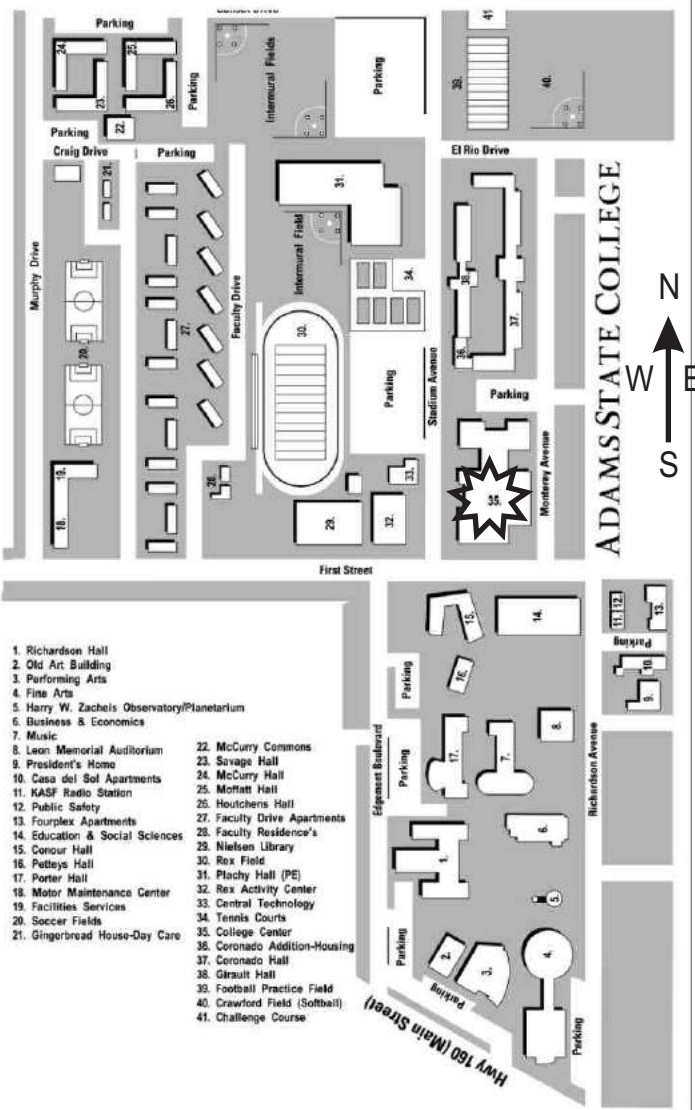
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**LOCATION ON CAMPUS for UNIT CONVENTION**



**College Center  
Adams State College**

**Existence** from page 4  
 knowledge of God, becomes ignited through the fire of the love of God, witnesses the great and mighty signs of the Kingdom, becomes the cause of love among mankind and lives in the utmost state of sanctity and holiness, he shall surely attain to second birth, be baptized by the Holy Spirit and enjoy everlasting existence.

Is it not astonishing that although man has been created for the knowledge and love of God, for the virtues of the human world, for spirituality, heavenly illumination and eternal life, nevertheless, he continues ignorant and negligent of all this? Consider how he seeks knowledge of everything except knowledge of God. For instance, his utmost desire is to penetrate the mysteries of the lowest strata of the earth. Day by day he strives to know

what can be found ten meters below the surface, what he can discover within the stone, what he can learn by archaeological research in the dust. He puts forth arduous labors to fathom terrestrial mysteries but is not at all concerned about knowing the mysteries of the Kingdom, traversing the illimitable fields of the eternal world, becoming informed of the divine realities, discovering the secrets of God, attaining the knowledge of God, witnessing the splendors of the Sun of Truth and realizing the glories of everlasting life. He is unmindful and thoughtless of these. How much he is attracted to the mysteries of matter, and how completely unaware he is of the mysteries of Divinity! Nay, he is utterly negligent and oblivious of the secrets of Divinity. How great his ignorance! How conducive to his degradation! It is as if a

kind and loving father had provided a library of wonderful books for his son in order that he might be informed of the mysteries of creation, at the same time surrounding him with every means of comfort and enjoyment, but the son amuses himself with pebbles and playthings, neglectful of all his father's gifts and provision. How ignorant and heedless is man! The Father has willed for him eternal glory, and he is content with blindness and deprivation. The Father has built for him a royal palace, but he is playing with the dust; prepared for him garments of silk, but he prefers to remain unclothed; provided for him delicious foods and fruits, while he seeks sustenance in the grasses of the field.

(Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 225)

# October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>UNIT CONVENTION 3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> ☾	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all, 10:30-11:30 Potluck refreshments	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> ●	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all, 10:30-11:30 Potluck refreshments	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> ☾	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all, 10:30-11:30 Potluck refreshments	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> ○	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all, 10:30-11:30 Potluck refreshments	<b>UNIT CONVENTION ALAMOSA</b>					





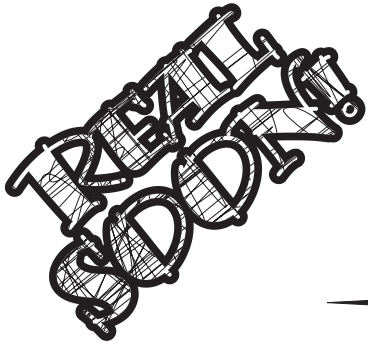
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**October 2004**

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# UNIT 115 CONVENTION

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