

Have no doubt that we are participating in the greatest drama in the history of humankind: the creation of a new race of men.

The current plan has a single purpose, that of advancing the process of entry by troops. In fact, this is to be the aim of a series of Plans that will carry the worldwide Bahá'í community to the end of the first century of the Formative Age in 2021. This plan is to be achieved through systematic activity involving three participants in the Plan: the community, the individual and the institutions.

Since Cluster 13's Intensive Program of Growth is something for us to do and not something to talk about forever, since the decision is firm and not half-hearted, and since we have turned to Bahá'u'lláh placing all our affairs in His hands, doors should immediately open for us. We move quickly, we organize our affairs and we are ready to welcome people to the Baha'i Faith.

There is no one formula to offer you for service. Such a formula does not exist and every believer has to make many different choices at every step of the way as one walks a path of service. But thinking of oneself in a specific situation does help one form a vision of the field of service one may wish to enter.

Our Maturity

We are mature Bahá'ís. Maturity has several dimensions. While the various aspects of our background — national, social, ethnic, cultural, educational, professional, and so on — should influence our patterns of thought and behavior and is reflected in our sense of identity. It is natural, of course, that a mature Bahá'í has learned to put these factors in the right perspective, never losing sight of the truth that the reality of his or her existence is his or her soul, which is passing through this world to acquire the attributes it needs for the eternal and glorious journey towards God. We are fully aware that the real source of our identity is servitude to Bahá'u'lláh. Our highest aspiration is to be able to answer the question within yourself by such phrases as "The one who loves Bahá'u'lláh," "The one who obeys the commands of Bahá'u'lláh," "The one who serves Bahá'u'lláh." And having the example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá always before you, you realize that this servitude has to translate into service to the loved ones of God.

We draw tremendous strength from our spiritual ancestors. We have intimate

connection with an eventful past, with the heroes through whose sacrifice the Cause has advanced. We have an acute awareness of the workings of the cycles of crisis and victory. Unlike so many souls whose connection with history too distant and who seek heroes and role models from those who are themselves victims of a failing society, we have no doubt that we are participating in the greatest drama in the history of humankind: the creation of a new race of men.

Our strong sense of Bahá'í identity leads to a strong sense of purpose. We feel the urgency with which we all need to attend to our own spiritual growth. We cannot be passive observers of our own lives, unhappy victims of society, shaped by commercial and political propaganda. Our lives on this earthly plane are too short, and the bounties of a pure heart capable of reflecting divine attributes too many, for us to become distracted by the passing attractions of a world lost in idle fancies. Thus we bend our energies purposefully towards acquiring perfections and refine our inner life.

Maturity also implies that one knows the traps of self-centeredness. We do not develop human virtues in isolation. Too great a focus on oneself, on one's potentials, on one's talents, distorts the very laudable goals of personal growth. The real arena of growth occurs in service to humanity. Idolizing self-improvement, self-expression and self-satisfaction can easily thwart our personal growth in service to the Cause and to humanity. Our maturity lies in the transformation of society and in the advancement of a civilization to be built according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

The forces that impel us in our endeavors are mainly our love for the Blessed Beauty, our yearning for true understanding, our inner drive towards excellence, and our deep concern for the well-being of humankind. Yet, there is an element of fear that also comes into play and this ensures watchfulness. While you look upward and forward, you guard against the promptings of the lower nature. You fear falling into the condition that Bahá'u'lláh has described in these terms:

Ye are even as the bird which soareth,

In ancient Greece (469 - 399 BC), Socrates was widely lauded for his wisdom. One day the great philosopher came upon an acquaintance, who ran up to him excitedly and said, "Socrates, do you know what I just heard about one of your students...?"

"Wait a moment," Socrates replied.

"Before you tell me, I'd like you to pass a little test. It's called the Test of Three."

"Test of Three?"

"That's correct," Socrates continued.

"Before you talk to me about my student let's take a moment to test what you're going to say. The first test is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?"

"No," the man replied, "actually I just heard about it."

"All right," said Socrates. "So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now let's try the second test, the test of Goodness. Is what you are about to tell me about my student something good?"

"No, on the contrary..."

"So," Socrates continued, "you want to tell me something bad about him even though you're not certain it's true?"

The man shrugged, a little embarrassed.

Socrates continued, "You may still pass though because there is a third test - the filter of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about my student going to be useful to me?"

"No, not really..."

"Well," concluded Socrates, "if what you want to tell me is neither True nor Good nor even Useful, why tell it to me at all?"

The man was defeated and ashamed and

CHILDREN'S CLASS TESTIMONIALS

Across the country neighborhood children's classes are gaining ground. As youth and adults arise to offer classes to neighborhood children, they are learning to keep things simple, to see that personal relationships with children and their parents are essential, and to rely constantly on Bahá'u'lláh for help.

Following are testimonials from teachers that share the most recent experiences with children's classes in the northeast.

"We started our children's classes to see what we could learn. We invited three neighborhood children and had our three kids. We noticed initially that our own

New Race continued from page 1

with the full force of its mighty wings and with complete and joyous confidence, through the immensity of the heavens, until, impelled to satisfy its hunger, it turneth longingly to the water and clay of the earth below it, and, having been entrapped in the mesh of its desire, findeth itself impotent to resume its flight to the realms whence it came. Powerless to shake off the burden weighing on its sullied wings, that bird, hitherto an inmate of the heavens, is now forced to seek a dwelling-place upon the dust. Wherefore, O My servants, defile not your wings with the clay of waywardness and vain desires, and suffer them not to be stained with the dust of envy and hate, that ye may not be hindered from soaring in the heavens of My divine knowledge.

PRAYER to nourish

As we pursue our purpose, our most cherished moments are those spent in communion with God, for prayer and meditation nourishes one's soul, and without that communion, it is impossible to persist in one's high endeavors. Similarly, the study of the Writings is one of our primary occupations. This is not the mere reading of a few verses. There is a great deal of meditation on the meaning and implications of each passage as well as diligent effort to apply the teachings to achieve personal growth, to contribute to the development of the community, and in the final analysis to building of civilization.

These are, then, the ways in which you define your identity, your purpose and your occupation as you arise to be involved in this Intensive Program of Growth.

Another aspect of the maturity we are considering here is the nature of the expectations. Specifically, you will not have decided to become involved because of the excitement of it. This is not to say that you are not excited and that you do not derive happiness from the service you are rendering, but your moments of happiness as well as those of intense pain do not define the direction of your action. Underlying all your feelings is an inner joy that is not the result of passing circumstances but the quality of your soul. It is a fundamental condition of your heart, not an emotion as a consequence of outside influences. Being mature implies that the immediate results of your activities are not what galvanize you, for you know that sometimes these will be encouraging and other times not. You are not overly affected by the criticisms of

Dr. Varqa, for whom this IPG is named, wrote the following closing paragraphs wrote in a 2005 letter to Baha'is in the United Kingdom.

Therefore, in reviewing the actual circumstances of the world and the occurrence of daily events seen in the mass media and remembering the warnings given on various occasions by the Holy Figures of our Faith, we have to appreciate the paramount importance of this destiny-making time in the history of mankind.

While the well-wishers, philosophers, leaders of thought, and governments fail to

others, nor are you out for praise. You do not seek recognition for what you do, and do not burden the institutions with the constant cry: "Here I am, here I am. Why don't you use my great talent?" You are a humble yet effective participant in this community endeavor.

The joy you feel comes from having recognized Bahá'u'lláh and from the knowledge that you are enfolded in His mercy. You draw satisfaction from the very act of sharing the message of Bahá'u'lláh with others, from being engaged in discussion of and reflection on the Word of God, from partaking of the bounty of guiding souls to the shores of the ocean of His Revelation as 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said:

If only thou couldst know what a high station is destined for those souls who are severed from the world, are powerfully attracted to the Faith, and are teaching, under the sheltering shadow of Bahá'u'lláh! How thou wouldst rejoice, how thou wouldst, in exultation and rapture, spread thy wings and soar heavenward — for being a follower of such a way, and a traveler toward such a Kingdom.

The statement of the Universal House of Justice that "fear of failure finds no place" in the culture of growth that should characterize the Bahá'í community. Why would you fear failure when you are confident that the Word of God is endowed with the power to transform hearts? It is the divine "Elixir," and you are but the channel through which it can flow. That you are merely a channel, of course, is not an idea that you repeatedly express because you have heard it so many times. It holds real significance for you. Every time you teach the Cause and adorn your utterance with the Words of Bahá'u'lláh you witness their effect on the human heart and catch a glimpse of what

present effective guidelines for humanity, Baha'u'llah gave the privilege to His followers to rise and guide human society with His vivifying teachings and principles.

Under the guidance of our Supreme Body, the Universal House of Justice, tremendous opportunities to serve have been created. The sacrifice of the devoted martyrs, teachers, and servants of the Faith has paved the way to bring the curative Message of Baha'u'llah to every single soul. We have to arise with devotion and determination and step forward in the arena of teaching. We have to remember the extreme austerity of this time and ponder the words of the Beloved Guardian reflected in The Advent of Divine Justice:

The field is indeed so immense, the period so critical, the Cause so great, the workers so few, the time so short, the privilege so priceless, that no follower of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, worthy to bear His name, can afford a moment's hesitation. God bless you all.

With loving Baha'i greetings,



Bahá'í Connection

**PUBLICATION: MONTHLY
VOL. 22 ISSUE 11**

Contributions/Subscriptions 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 images.

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

Richard Stamats
705 Drew Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80911
(719) 244-0813
EMAIL: rstamats@gmail.com

Published by

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

Please send all address changes to assembly address.

*There is no copyright,
but please include source.*

And a Child... from page 1

children's behavior was a challenge. We talked with them and they told us they couldn't understand why we complemented the other kids for every little thing and didn't praise them the same way. We explained that these kids needed praise for little things and that this would slowly change. Our children understood and this started us on the process of involving the children.

We asked them what would make the classes better and they said they wanted more skits. So we did more skits and they loved them! "We start each class with a virtue. We talk about it and create a short skit to show how to use the virtue. The kids fill out a 'virtue pledge sheet' that their parents sign so they feel involved. The next week, the kids parents. Mrs. Penn joined them and soon the parents began introducing Mrs. Penn to other parents. The classes began the next week with six children ages three to eleven.

"The other challenge I set for myself was to use the Ruhi Book 3 classes," Mrs. Penn says. "People say these lessons are too simple, that they won't work in America. But as I prepared I realized that these lessons were for children in first grade spiritually not necessarily in first grade academically." Despite the wide age range, the class was a hit. "I depended entirely on Bahá'u'lláh," Mrs. Penn says. "And I felt the divine assistance at every turn." The children loved the quotes and vied with each other to memorize them. One game, which Mrs. Penn feared would bore children used to high-tech computer games, was such a success that the children asked to repeat it. After 15 classes and the addition of two students, the children have become like a family. "These children are so good together," Mrs. Penn says. "One mother told me this wasn't always the case and that for a while she wouldn't let her children play with some of the others. Now she sees them getting along and I told her it was all about them developing their spiritual qualities." As they began running out of classes from Book 3, Mrs. Penn found additional Book 3 classes, quotations, and ideas on

www.RuhiResource.com

rg. "One of the things I've come to see is the importance of trusting in Bahá'u'lláh and keeping things very simple," explains Mrs. Penn. "We didn't make up flyers. There was no real planning. We saw the children and we went to them." Home visits have begun, and with them, the process of teaching the parents. "Our community celebrates these classes," she says. "We're thinking of gearing our teaching efforts to this neighborhood and inviting parents to devotional gatherings and study circles."

"Spiritual education is different than intellectual education," Mrs. Penn says. "Spiritual education touches the heart and appeals to all ages. This is what is happening here with these children. Their hearts are being touched."

"About a month ago kids were in the driveway asking for our kids to come out. I said this is the night we say prayers together. I told them they could wait or join us. They all came in and now it's becoming a regular happening. One boy brought his mother. You can see how having a Bahá'í home can be a beacon of light. My kids tell me they feel such joy from the classes and are recognizing the need to teach the Faith because they see the ills in society are a lack of knowing about Bahá'u'lláh." Led By Youth 91 North Cluster (MA)

"My mom asked if I'd like to start a children's class with a Bahá'í who lives nearby. I'd never done one and I thought it would be cool to see what it would be before getting more involved. It was during the spring, when I'm not as busy with drama at my high school. So, we met and planned the class. We made some flyers and handed them out to the families I babysit for and some others. We called people too. At the first class we had five or six kids. The kids were two to four year-olds so the classes were very simple. We'd eat pizza. We'd sing a song. We'd practice saying please and thank you. Mostly we worked on sharing and caring. We started going into tolerance and diversity a little, like all bugs are different but they're all still bugs. Or one time we made a big garden out of paper. Each kid made a flower and put it on the paper. Every flower was different — but that was OK because they were still flowers. Sometimes we'd play a game. We'd do a little show and tell. The parents would help out and they liked it a lot. We hope to do it again this winter."

The Power of Persistence Long Island Cluster (NY) "We live in a neighborhood mostly populated by young families. For seven years we have been giving out flyers inviting our neighbors to activities. Some interest was

expressed but no one had ever actually come to any of them from the neighborhood. Having gone through Ruhi Book 3 we decided we would try holding a children's class this past summer. Although we are grandparents we thought this might be the way to attract these young families. We made up flyers announcing the classes and my husband delivered them to all 70 households in the neighborhood, trying to speak with people whenever he could. We weren't sure how this effort would be received but we were hopeful that at least a few of the neighbors' children would come by... We were filled with excitement at the response. Seven children regularly attended for the 8-week session and up to 12 children attended some classes. We emphasized virtues, used Ruhi Book 3 and incorporated games, stories, music and the arts... Several adults stayed and assisted with the program...

"All the families expressed tremendous appreciation for the classes... We are the thankful ones — thankful that we had the courage to initiate this program this summer; thankful that we had an opportunity to get to know and love these children. It was a real joy to share virtues and discuss the qualities that we all need to develop to make this a better world. We need to be persistent in our efforts and if we do that, we receive wonderful confirmations. We plan on following up with other core activities... until we hold our children's classes again next summer." Building on Existing Relationships 128 East Cluster (MA)

"Our children's class started off with my daughter Samantha, who teaches school in Boston, having a 4th grade celebration for her class and their parents late last spring. Then she invited them all to come over for an open house and gradually we settled into having five to fifteen kids and a few parents over every Wednesday. After a cook out and socializing we'd start a discussion. We gave everyone a quote about a virtue and told a story that illustrated the virtue. We asked the children to practice the virtue and the following week we'd have the kids draw a picture of what they'd done and then talk about it. We wanted to be very responsive to the kids. For example, one child said she'd like to be a cook so she helped bake cookies. One little girl said she like to sing so we're going to invite singers over to lead some singing. We took a very gradual, gentle approach with the classes. We got to know the kids and their parents, we built relationships, and gradually things came together. "Samantha knew the kids well and that really opened the door for us. Next she wants to invite her co-workers over to talk about spiritual education. Because of the classes we had this summer she's proved



s.o

DR. VARQA PROJECT: COLORADO CLUSTER 13 FIRST

If only thou couldst know what a high station is destined for those who are powerfully attracted to the Faith, and are teaching, under its influence, thou wouldst rejoice, how thou wouldst, in exultation and rapture, ascend heavenward — for being a follower of such a way, and a traveler

10am — Devotions & Children's Classes	28
10:30am — TT Reflection meeting	
10:30-12:30 — DT & Prayers	
12:30pm — Potluck Lunch	
1pm -3pm — DT & Prayers	
3pm-5pm — DT & Prayers	
5pm — TT Reflection	
6pm — Dinner	
7pm — Fireside & Children's Activities	

10am — Devotions & Children's Classes	4
10:30am — TT Reflection meeting	
10:30-12:30 — DT & Prayers	
12:30pm — Potluck Lunch	
1pm -3pm — DT & Prayers	
3pm-5pm — DT & Prayers	
5pm — TT Reflection	
6pm — Dinner	
7pm — Fireside & Children's Activities	

10am — Prayers	29
10:30am — TT Reflection meeting	
10:30-12:30 — DT & Prayers	
12:30pm — Lunch	
1pm -3pm — DT & Prayers	
3pm-5pm — DT & Prayers	
5pm — TT Reflection	
6pm — Dinner	
7pm — Fireside & Children's Activities	

Above all, the friends need to remain ever conscious of the magnitude of the spiritual forces that are at their disposition. They are members of a community whose world-embracing, institutions, secular as well as religious, are for the most part dissolving. Of all the peoples of the world, they alone can recognize, amidst the welter of a tempestuous age, the Hand of the Divine Redeemer that traces its course and controls its destinies. They alone are aware of the silent growth of that orderly world polity whose fabric they themselves are weaving. It is their institutions that will come to be regarded as the hallmark and glory of the age they have been called upon to establish. The building process, to which they are consecrated, is the one hope of a stricken society. For, it is actuated by the generating influence of God's changeless Purpose, and is evolving within the framework of the Administrative Order of His Faith. And remind them that

10am — Prayers	30
10:30am — TT Reflection meeting	
10:30-12:30 — DT & Prayers	
12:30pm — Lunch	
1pm -3pm — DT & Prayers	
3pm-5pm — DT & Prayers	
5pm — TT Reflection	
6pm — Dinner	
7pm — Fireside & Children's Activities	

5

10am — Prayers	
10:30am — TT Reflection meeting	
10:30-12:30 — DT & Prayers	
12:30pm — Lunch	
1pm -3pm — DT & Prayers	
3pm-5pm — DT & Prayers	
5pm — TT Reflection	
6pm — Dinner *TB	
7pm — Fireside & Children's Activities	

6

they are the illu
`Abdu'l- Baha in

*Heroes are they
the field of
make them to
and proofs. I
they, cause th
that brimme
certitude. O n
songsters th
make them
thickets, wha
deep.*

DT = Direct T

2005 Pilgrim Notes on Institute process and more

When Melody Logue and Bobbie Guffey from Dayton Ohio went on pilgrimage in June 2005, they were surprised to hear not one, but three separate talks given by members of the Universal House of Justice and the Board of Continental Counselors on different aspects of the institute process.

“The purpose of pilgrimage,” stated Paul Lample in his opening address to the pilgrims, “is to take your experiences here back to share with the friends at home.” Both women took this to heart, and have been sharing their new insights on the importance of the institute process to advance their own cluster here in the Midwest.

The following are highlights from Melody and Bobbie’s pilgrims’ notes from the three talks given by Universal House of Justice members Paul Lample and Payman Mohajer, and Continental Counselor Joan Lincoln on understanding the institute process and the important relationship between individual initiative and obedience to our divinely inspired administrative bodies. Paul Lample, while stressing the institute’s importance in teaching the Faith and promoting entry by troops, cautioned against being too rigid and pointed out there are ways of supporting the institute process and Ruhi without taking the Ruhi series, for example, by speaking at or holding a fireside or by having regular devotions.

“The process of entry by troops has happened all over the world,” Mr. Lample emphasized. “In 1996 the House looked at entry by troops and decided to take new believers and place them in the institute program. From 1996 to 2021, we will be all working on one simple aim—entry by troops.”

He asked that pilgrims go back and advance their clusters. “Every area or cluster is different,” he emphasized. Generally, a cluster becomes an “A” cluster once fifty people have gone through the sequence of courses, but remember, fifty is only a number!

One community wrote the House of Justice, distressed that they had only managed to move 46 of their community members through the Ruhi courses. They were concerned that they had fallen short. However, the Universal House of Justice was delighted with their progress and asserted that fifty is a target number, not an absolute. Unity of action is the most important element in any community undertaking! Joan Lincoln, Continental Counselor, also explained some of the reasons behind and the evolution of the institute process. Since 1963, the House of Justice has been watching how things have been getting done, consolidation and deepening working hand in hand, but not very successfully. We were all working around the clock and wearing many hats. There was entry by troops and consolidation, but little balance. We needed more people wearing fewer hats! We were challenged by many Bahá’is coming into the Faith because we lacked resources in

large numbers.

In the Four Year Plan (1996 to 2000), the training institutes were already functioning. The Five Year Plan introduced the clusters and was met with “instant, exact and immediate obedience to the Universal House of Justice from the Bahá’is around the world.”

There are 17,000 clusters now worldwide. The geographic cluster area is influenced by the pattern of transportation in a given community, in essence whatever is an area of manageable growth for a given community. Last Nov. 2004, there were approximately 50 “A” clusters world wide, in Feb. 2005 there were 70, and by Ridvan 2005 there were 150. In the past the growing world-wide Bahá’i community has had difficulty sustaining growth and needed a more systematic approach.

Considering the intensive program area of growth nobody has “the formula,” asserts Mrs. Lincoln. “We must have an attitude of learning. Use your head! Knowledge translated into action leads to growth. We should be outward looking—opening our services to the public.” Quoting Hand of the Cause of God, Mr. Furutan, she said—“Just open your mouth and teach!”

All of the speakers emphasized that both individual initiative and obedience to the administrative bodies are indispensable to sustained growth in the Baha’i community. House of Justice member Payman Mohajer focused his address on the individual’s role in the institute process. He expressed that there has been a change in the culture of the Baha’i community during this Five Year Plan. Now we’re learning as individual Baha’is that we have a responsibility for consolidation. Individual initiative is going out to teach, train, and foster new believers while the LSA provides the materials and human resources.

He also stated that individual initiative must be connected to the administrative bodies and goals, for, as Mrs. Lincoln reminded friends in her talk, An LSA is a divine institution capable of ministering to thousands. Mrs. Lincoln also spoke to the importance of individual initiative. Know the culture you are teaching. Be creative and imaginative and don’t fear making mistakes! She also stressed that spiritual transformation is indispensable in each of us in order to build the Kingdom. Quoting Shoghi Effendi, she reminded the friends that Baha’is are not perfect, but the System of Baha’u’llah is.

Echoing both Mr. Mohajer and Mrs. Lincoln, Mr. Lample encouraged the pilgrims to go visit Baha’is and have firesides and devotionals in their own homes. One on one, he asserted, we cannot tell other Baha’is what to do, but the institute process is necessary for the Faith to grow.

In closing his address, Mr. Lample encouraged the pilgrims, Leave behind the old state of mind. Take on a new state of mind. Problems will occur; that’s natural. What assemblies have already done is not wrong, but now we are focusing on the institute

What is Alabaster?

With the **Chilean Temple** Initiative underway, Bahá’is everywhere are eagerly anticipating the completion of the last of the continental Mashriqu’-Adhkárs in Santiago, Chile. The Temple of Light, as it is being called, is set to be made out of Spanish alabaster and cast glass.

Alabaster, a naturally translucent stone, is composed of a variety of fine-grained gypsum. Exceptionally delicate and light, it is known to be easily scratched, weathered and soiled. Like all forms of gypsum, alabaster is formed by evaporating bedded deposits that are precipitated from evaporating seawater. It was once considered to be “the stone of the gods,” and although alabaster can be found in an array of colors, no two pieces remain the same, making each piece of alabaster truly one of a kind, similarly to our beloved Mashriqu’-Adhkárs.

The alabaster stone is mentioned in the Bible in two precious accounts surrounding Jesus Christ. In one story, a woman carrying an alabaster jar anoints the head of Christ with an expensive ointment shortly before His crucifixion, as a means of cleansing and purification. While the majority of His disciples saw it as waste, Christ assured them that this was an act of service and that “...wherever this Gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.” Similarly to the alabaster flask which was used to anoint the head of Christ, the Chilean Temple will manifest itself as a receptacle of light, ushering in the manifold blessings of Baha’u’lláh by anointing each individual who enters its portals with the fragrances of the Kingdom.

With its fragile nature in mind, Chilean Temple architect Siamak Hariri chose to place the alabaster on the inside walls of the structural skeleton. Cast glass was then chosen to be placed on the outside layer of the Temple’s frame, sheltering the alabaster from weather conditions and various elements which can be harmful, while still allowing for its translucent nature to shine through. Hariri Pontarini Architects have also commissioned a local glass artisan in Toronto to create a special type of cast glass, which has never before been used on an edifice, and is therefore being extensively tested for its strength and stability. According to Justin Ford, an intern architect with Hariri Pontarini, the cast glass, which is created out of small pieces of recycled glass, “is quite rigid, thicker than typical clear glass that is used. It’s robust.” The glass pieces are first placed into a mold of the desired shape, and then put into an oven for melting, and finally carefully cooled, with the eventual goal being that the glass will emulate the alabaster stone in thickness.

With the architectural firm working diligently to create the blessed Temple of Light, Bahá’is of the world continue to patiently and prayerfully anticipate its glorious

Home Visits Open Hearts

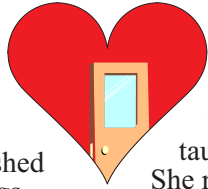
By Carol Black

Bahá'u'lláh said, "It is through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth" (Gleanings, p.305). At a recent weekend gathering for area coordinators held at Louhelen Bahá'í School, we learned the meaning of these words.

We sat comfortably together drinking tea, listening to inspiring messages and enjoying Louhelen hospitality. After lunch on Saturday we again gathered in the meeting room but were given a surprise! Without advance warning, we were told that arrangements had been made for us to leave the Louhelen sanctuary and go out into the Flint and Davison communities to do home visits that had been pre-arranged. We picked up our lists of nam

es and directions, arranged rides, and took off! My group was sent into the heart of Flint, one of America's most impoverished communities. We were told that a family expected our arrival. The children of this non-Baha'i family attended weekly Bahá'í children's classes at Louhelen. Upon pulling up to the house, we saw the children playing outside and stopped to introduce ourselves. The mother of the children peered out of her front door, wondering who these strange people were who had stopped to talk with her children. They had not told their mother that they had requested a home visit at their last children's class.

The children were excited about our visit and called over their friends to come and meet us. We explained to their mother that the children had requested a home visit, and we had come to give her the opportunity to ask us questions and share a prayer with her. The mother's suspicion and distrust soon gave way to a joyful meeting where her children related stories of the life of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh on the spur of the moment. The youngest one knew the heart-breaking story of Navvab, wife of Bahá'u'lláh, attempting to make some sweet cakes in the dark of prison life, and mistakenly putting salt rather than sugar into the cakes meant for the Blessed Beauty. Another home visit team had been sent to a home just down the street. A woman from that house came walking down the street to tell her friends, "You better come over to our house! The Bahá'is is here and we about to be saying some prayers!" The mother at our house called back, "Well they at my



house too!" The mother told us how much she appreciated her children having the opportunity to attend Bahá'í children's classes and to learn about the oneness of humankind, saying they were not taught these values in public school.

She related how their school system had no school buses and she had to drive the children to and from school daily, while working two jobs herself. We asked if there was anything she would like to say a prayer for. She immediately asked for prayers for her family. The children spontaneously ran into the house, retrieved their prayer books, and passed them around.

We learned and received more from this visit than they received from us. We learned that love and sincerity are qualities always appreciated and never to be ashamed of. We learned the joy of visiting the home of non-Bahá'ís we had never met. The children brought such joy to us. And sharing a prayer together in the front yard of that home opened all of our hearts to

Pueblo Community

Activities

Ruhi the first thru third Sundays of every month.

Fireside the Fourth Sunday of every month.

Both are being held at The Daily Grind coffee shop 209 S. Union Ave. at 10 am.

NEEDS

The Pueblo LSA **needs of speakers for a once monthly Fireside**. We are going to have them the last Sunday of every month starting this month at The Daily Grind coffee shop at 10am.

Our community is quite small and very elderly and any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Anyone interested in helping can call me at 719 584-2803. After 7pm is the best time to get a hold of me or better yet they can email me. Lori Spinuzzi <lss@fone.net>

Winter School

Theme: **ONE COMMON FAITH**

When: **Friday, January 25th - Sunday, January 27th, 2008**

Where: **Saint Malo, Allenspark, Colorado**

Registration by MAIL ONLY.

Checks made payable to Colorado East Bahai Schools Committee

Registrar: Star Harmon

1510 Crestone Ave.

Colorado Springs, Co. 80906

RATES:

Includes room 2 nights; breakfast - lunch - dinner Sat. 26th; breakfast - lunch Sun. 27th

Adults=13 and up

Children age 4-12 stay FREE with a \$35 CHARGE for meals & supplies

Children age 3 & under stay & meals FREE

ROOMS:

- 1 Adult ---- \$165
- 2 Adults----\$140 each
- 3 Adults----\$125 each
- 4+ Adults----\$110 each

SUITES:

- 1 Adults---\$190
- 2 Adults---\$165 each
- 3 Adults---\$150 each
- 4+ Adults---\$135 each



Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Colorado Springs
1622 Rainier Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

NOV 2007

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLO.SPGS.,CO
PERMIT NO. 684

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PEOPLE ARE NEEDED PLEASE ATTEND at Bahá'í Center Sat., Oct 27 starting at 9 am

On Saturday October 27 from 9am-12pm an event of untold importance in the history of our communities will take place under the banner **DR. VARQA PROJECT: COLORADO CLUSTER 13 FIRST INTENSIVE PROGRAM OF GROWTH** To help insure the success of this auspicious occasion everyone is encouraged to attend. The physical presence of as many as possible will provide a compelling impetus to the labor of so many toward the future goal of entry by troops.

The troubles of this world pass, and what we have left is what we have made our souls, so it is to this we must look to becoming more spiritual, drawing nearer to God, no matter what our human minds and bodies go through."

Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*



...we have reached a historic moment pregnant with hopes and possibilities — a moment at which significant trends in the world are becoming more closely aligned with principles and objectives of the Cause of God. The urgency upon our community to press onward in fulfillment of its world-embracing mission is therefore tremendous.

Universal House of Justice, Ridvan 146