

The Venice Outreach Booth Is Back!

By Richard Omura

Norman Ingram is back on the "anything goes" Venice Beach boardwalk in Los Angeles, California with the Urantia Book table, introducing the revelation to people from all over the world. Fellow reader Jacob Dix and I were there with Norman recently amidst the throng that is probably a modern-day equivalent of the Capernaum of Jesus's time. What an opportunity to talk to the myriads of people from all over the planet about the Urantia Book!

For those of you who have never been to Venice Beach, it is a sight to see. There are tourists from all over the world, New Age aficionados, L.A. locals, Christian fundamentalists, henna tattoo artists, Rastafarians, Hare Krishnas, Jews on their way to the Jewish Center, skaters, bladers, surfers, rappers, conservative businessmen, tourists, musicians, artists, store owners, lawyers, athletes, and every other type of human being you can think of—all this amidst the many stores and vendors spread along the walkway fronted by sand and sea.

At the Venice booth one can encounter truth seekers who are sincere in their efforts to make some sense of this world as well as religious fundamentalists trying to save our souls. To sit quietly at the booth, shining forth the Father's love, being available to anyone who wants to talk about Urantia Book concepts or philosophy, religion and spirituality in general, is certainly an act of service that is both enjoyable and productive. It is fruitful not only for those who are being introduced to the revelation, but also for those of us who doing the introducing because it gives us a chance to try to put into words and actions the teachings we have gleaned from the book.

One woman had the book but didn't know where to attend a study group—and she was from Chicago! We gave her the phone number for the study group closest to her, which was 533 Diversey Parkway—Urantia Foundation headquarters! Will they ever be surprised to learn where she heard about their group!

UBLA is now sponsoring the Venice Beach booth, which is up every Sunday right where Rose Ave. meets the boardwalk. With Norman Ingram returning to Africa towards the end of summer, we are looking for volunteers. Even if it is for just a few hours once a month, this service opportunity will give you some new insights into life. I invite any and all of you, if you live nearby or are planning to visit the L.A. area, to drop by. Just to be safe, email me at omra@mediaone.net or Norman at norlastar@aol.com first to make sure we will be there on the day you plan to come. If you are an artist or have a secondary work based on the UB, you are welcome to set up right alongside us to showcase your wares. This is one of the most dynamic and interesting UB-related activities on the planet, so if you like the sun, the beach and people of all types, come on down.

LIGHT FOR DARK AFRICA Africa may be the least developed of all continents, but it is the number one priority for Norman, who is



Norman Ingram

able to do this work, but Norman is one of the few lucky ones who has enough time on his hands to actually do it. However, he needs our financial support. He assures us that any funds donated for his journey will be put to maximum use. An anonymous donor has agreed to contribute \$4,000 if Norman can match this sum from the grassroots level. Any amount will help a lot. Rev. Roger Goffeney, who accompanied Norman in the beginning of his 1998 tour, has suggested having the funds in place before starting out, rather than waiting in Africa for money to "dribble in" as happened before. Norman says, "I plead not for myself but for the African people, who are as hungry as anyone on the planet for this magnificent revelation." Because of the recent problems Norman has had with his leg, he is afraid he may not be able to continue in this work too much longer. He asks us to help him fulfill his mission while his health allows.

Based on the advice of Cynthia Taylor in South Africa and Mike Rayl's father in Botswana, Norman has adjusted his itinerary to suit the present political climate in each of the countries he plans to visit. Pradhana Fuchs from Peru, who accompanied Norman on his South American missions, has agreed to be his co-worker in this African tour. Many of you may have met Pradhana at IC96. Pradhana's physical strength and dedicated heart will be just what is needed to make this journey efficient and successful.

Norman's tentative itinerary begins August 3, flying from JFK airport in New York to Ghana and Senegal. The Reverend Michael Beckwith (of the Agape Church in Los Angeles), and Polly Friedman (of The School of Meanings and Values) will be accompanying Norman and Pradhana on this leg of the trip. After three weeks in that region, Norman intends to fly to Johannesburg, South Africa, where he will spend two weeks before beginning the east coast tour on September 3. The first stop will be Botswana, then Mozambique, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, ending up in Egypt, and returning to Los Angeles on November 14, 2000.

Norman says, "If it is God's will, I will return to Africa. In the meantime I will do all I can to be of service to the African readers, and help them with their studies and outreach." Tax-deductible donations can be made to: The School of Meanings and Values, PO Box 3324, Camarillo, CA 93011, earmarked for WOUN (World Outreach for Urantia Nations). ■