

LETTERS - Letters may be edited for reasons of brevity or clarity. Opinions expressed in these columns are not necessarily those of the National Spiritual Assembly or the Editor.

Improve our meetings by reading the Writings

In his letter (Bahá'í Journal UK, September issue) Hugh Fixsen appeals to us all to consider more closely our mutual relationships, so that our meetings can become an inspiration and joy, and we ourselves be changed into instruments of God's divine purpose in the world.

What is the cause of our apparent failure to attract large numbers to the Faith? In His letter to a believer who was magnetised by the Heavenly Kingdom, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote: "Direct thine attention to the Holy Tablets ... Then wilt thou see that today these heavenly Teachings are the remedy for a sick and suffering world, and a healing balm for the sores of the body of mankind. They are the spirit of life, the ark of salvation, the magnet to draw down eternal glory, the dynamic power to motivate the inner self of man". (Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p61, 1978 ed)

The Universal House of Justice has told us there is no single solution to the problem, but if we read the Writings attentively, then we are promised the power that can motivate our inner-life.

Ruth Bradley

We need a national campaign for race unity

I believe in the UK we need a national campaign for race unity like the Bahá'ís of the USA. Our race problem is very much hidden under the surface, and needs to be opened up.

"There are no whites and blacks before God. All colours are one, and that is the colour of servitude to God. Scent and colour are not important. The heart is important. If the heart is pure, white or black or any colour makes no difference. God does not look at colour; He looks at the hearts. He whose heart is pure is better. He whose character is better is more pleasing". ('Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p4)

Kamyar Solhjoo

Practising virtues when booking events

Many of us will attend at least one residential Bahá'í event during the course of the year, whether it be a youth camp, spring/summer/winter school or the Arts Academy - and when we arrive we expect to be adequately fed, watered, supervised, entertained and comfortably accommodated.

If day trips are on the programme we trust that someone has organised transport. If classes are provided, we expect trained and well-prepared teachers. If the event is under canvas we expect that there are enough waterproof tents for everybody - and this is of course, quite understandable. But friends, let us try to look at things from the organising committee's point of view: day trips need to be booked in advance, as do minibuses, tents need to be hired, food requirements have to be carefully worked out (running short of lunch on a Sunday in the middle of the countryside with 80 ravenous youngsters to feed is no fun). In the case of classroom lessons, if numbers suddenly double three days prior to the school, the pupil/teacher ratio will be inadequate to serve the needs of the students and demands on the teachers become intolerable. There are also child protection procedures which have to be adhered to.

Friends, there is one thing which links all these problems and can help remedy them. It is the need for everyone

to organise their diaries, reach a decision, and then book well in advance. It is not good for the prestige of the Faith if we are perceived as not knowing what we are doing in our dealings with nonBahá'ís organisations. We need to be seen as thorough and professional in our approach. We need to be systematized!

If we endeavour to focus our attention on minimising, or even eliminating, such uncertainty for the event committees, it would contribute to the increased success of all such events and go a long way to helping reduce the stress levels imposed upon the organisers!

The Welsh Spring School Committee

Enjoying the "New Dawn" on video

We would just like to add a few words to what Beatrice Kent wrote in the September Journal "A night to remember" with regard to the world premier of "Ridván - the New Dawn Oratorio" composed by Denver Morgan and performed by the National Chamber Orchestra of Wales in the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea, earlier this year.

We very much regret that we were not there for this world premiere in March but we have since bought the video of "New Dawn" and it is one and a half hours of pure delight. It is a professional recording of an oratorio where music and song provide sweetness to the soul and warmth to the heart. It is joyful and uplifting throughout and captivating in the beauty of its presentation.

We have now watched it several times and shown it to friends who not only all wish to buy the video but also agree that in the world of music there is a Bahá'í genius in our midst who has provided a "first" for the Bahá'í world in the composition of this marvellous, soulstirring piece of work "The Ridván Tablet" of Bahá'u'lláh. No doubt but that in the future this oratorio will be performed and sung in countless concert halls around the world and will be enjoyed by many generations to come.

"The Divine Springtime is come, O Most Exalted pen ..." This video recording is a wonderful means of teaching those who are lovers of the arts. "New Dawn" is a piece of work written for the Glory of God and should become a must in every Bahá'í home much as the Ridván Tablet itself, as one of the most holy writings of Bahá'u'lláh, takes pride of place in our personal libraries.

This work adds stature to the Faith in the British Isles and enormous personal credit to Wales and we find words in every way inadequate to describe this piece of work other than to remind ourselves that music is a ladder by which the soul ascends to God.

Thelma and Ron Batchelor