



Welcome to the inaugural issue of the *Life Off A Star* newsletter. At the annual fall LOAS chairs meeting, which was held on November 13 & 14, the former LOAS chairs voted to create a newsletter that would be e-mailed to past LOAS conferees. The purpose of communicating information via this newsletter is three fold. First, it will be a means to keep the LOAS community connected throughout the year, secondly, it will allow the current LOAS chairs to disseminate information regarding their conferences and finally, it will be a mechanism for the former LOAS chairs to communicate any changes to the LOAS policy.

The newsletter is scheduled to be e-mailed three times a year. The time frames are 1) late November, after the fall LOAS chairs meeting has occurred, 2) late February, after the blue book has been mailed, and 3) in July, before the LOAS conferences begin.

Life On A Star I August 13-20, 2011 **Bowling Alone and Praying Together** **Our Evolving Social Ties**

Were you raised Unitarian Universalist? Catholic? Jewish? Protestant? Muslim? Methodist? Mormon? Did you marry someone of the same faith? Are you now a member of the religion in which you were raised? Chances are, your family is not religiously homogenous. Your parents, your siblings and even your spouse may practice a different religion than you do. In the past fifty years, America has given rise to every possible permutation of religious affiliation (and non-affiliation) within families and social circles. While Americans consider themselves deeply religious, this widespread diversity has also contributed to making America remarkably tolerant.

Please join us next summer for LOAS I where we will explore the changing role of American social institutions and America's evolving religious landscape. **Robert Putnam**, Harvard Professor and former Dean of the Kennedy School, will lead us in this theme discussion. Professor Putnam is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, a Fellow of the British Academy, and past president of the American Political Science Association. In 2006, Putnam received the Skytte Prize, one of the

highest accolades for a political scientist. He is the author of a dozen books, among them the highly acclaimed national bestseller *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* and his most recent book *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*. More information on *American Grace* is available at: www.americangrace.org.

Your LOAS I chairs - Julie, Karen and Tom are busy working away on planning a fantastic conference for next summer. Future installments of this newsletter will include updates on the Minister of the Week, workshops and youth programming. Please feel free to call or email us at anytime with ideas and inspiration for LOAS I 2011! We can be reached at: **Julie Mabey**, jmabey@nyc.rr.com, 212-316-9292 or **Karen Gray & Tom Kane**, kgray66@yahoo.com, 617-244-0566



Starting with the 2010 conferences, chairs for LOAS I & II will be selected two years ahead of time. This will allow future chairs additional time to select a theme speaker. This past summer Marion Halberg & Michael Hardiman were selected as chairs for LOAS I, 2012 and Tanya Van Order & Beat Barblan were selected as chairs for LOAS II, 2012.



Life On A Star II August 20–27, 2011 The World in Your Pocket

We live at a time when media and culture blend into an almost irresistible force. Media connects us to friends, family and the world, and the mix of media and culture defines how we connect to each other and therefore who we are. With mobile devices and YouTube, you've got a printing press and the power to speak to the world in your pocket. Our theme speaker **Peter Phipps**, is the Managing Editor for New Media, Providence Journal and instructor at the University of Rhode Island.

We'll explore the transformative power of communications technology -- how it has changed family, politics, culture and commerce. Subjects will include the change from analog to digital; the music technology battleground; how advertising's cultural narratives create desire and demand; how the media manipulates us for power and profit; how movies transfer culture and define our values; capitalism, sexism and racism; mass media and the

colonization of our minds; television and the shared cultural experience; and the rise and fall of newspapers, now at the point of transition or destruction. What is the future of media when all media is digital? Does journalism have a future? Does it matter to society? Join us as we examine the amazing technological revolution that is truly changing our world and the way we live in it.

The Minister of the Week will be **Rev. Diane Teichert**, who is minister of the Paint Branch UU Church in Adelphi, Maryland.

The week will leave plenty of time for relaxation and fellowship. Rock on the porch in between stimulating workshops, hearty meals, gorgeous sunsets, fun, and fellowship. Our children will enjoy their own program with wonderful leaders and fun activities. Your LOAS II chairs, **Diane & John Shriver** can be reached at diane@dianetaraz.com.



A portion of each newsletter will be reserved for occasions or milestones within our LOAS community. Send an e-mail to our editor if your family has a birth, graduation from high school or college, engagement, marriage, death or other important event. If you know of anyone who would like to receive *Life Off A Star* newsletters or if you do not want to receive any further newsletters, send your request to our editor. Hard copies will be mailed to any person who does not have an e-mail address.

LOAS Coordinating Committee: Irene Bush (Chair), David Whitford, Kay Snowden, Shelley Lauer-Bader (Registrar) and John Pustell (Treasurer).

Council of Conference Representatives: *LOAS I* – Becky Friedkin & Michael Hardiman with Marie Dupree as Alternate. *LOAS II* – Gary Kunz and Phil Sears with Darren Grebe as Alternate.

LOAS website: www.lifeonastar.org

Newsletter Editor: Patti Emmons - patti@emmons.org



Births:

A son, **Solal Azariah Silberbusch** was born on October 4, 2010 in Jerusalem, Israel to **Daniel Harry Silberbusch** (formerly known as Daniel Bush) & **Oshrat Cohen Silberbusch**. The proud grandparents are Irene & John Bush.

Graduations & Colleges:

Ross Pustell (son of Randall Grometstein and John Pustell) graduated from Swarthmore College this past May.

Michael Psaris (son of Shelly and Tony) moved from Anaheim, California to Portland, Oregon this past August and is presently enrolled in Portland State University. He is working towards his Masters in Geography with a focus on Geographic Information Systems.

Engagements:

Michael Henry (son of Gail Henry and Sam Francis) and **Skye Wallace** are engaged. A May 2011 wedding is planned.

Jesse Emmons (son of Patti and Will) and **Shannon Yeager** were engaged in March 2010.

Marriages:

Liz Crane (daughter of Barb and Bill) was married in August 2007 to **Nat Tipton**. They are the proud parents of **Molly Crane Tipton**, born January 13, 2009. They live in Jamaica Plain, Boston, not far from Bill & Barb's new home in Somerville, MA. **Sarah Crane** was married in August 2009 to **Kevin O'Neill**; they live in Seattle.

Wilbur Page Emmons and **Jessica Ann Hessel** were married on Sunday, September 5, 2010. Patti and Will Emmons are delighted to have Jessica's daughters, **Ivy** (age 3) and **Mallory** (age 5) as their first grandchildren.

Passages:

Art Smith (husband of Wilma Ronco) passed away this past May.

Scott Bain (husband of Christa) passed away on July 17, 2010.

Other News:

Barnaby Feder's article titled "The gift of playing God" was published in the fall 2010 issue of the UU World. The link to his article is: www.uuworld.org/adeas/articles/170684.shtml.

Maggie (daughter of Gail Henry and Sam Francis) and husband **Hamish Crombie** emigrated from New Zealand the beginning of November. They will be living and working in the Washington D.C. area.

