



Think & Believe

A Publication of *Alpha Omega Institute*

November/December 1996; Vol. 13 No. 6

What's New at AOI?

(by Dave and Mary Jo Nutting)

As 1996 winds down, we have taken some time to review where we've been and look ahead to the new year. We are excited and amazed at what God is doing!

It's been a busy year with speaking trips, seminars, camps, conferences, and Vacation Bible Schools in Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, California, Alaska, Kansas, South Dakota, and Minnesota. We praise God for the enthusiastic audiences and great response to the Creation message. We have been blessed as we see Him at work in so many of you.

We really are a very small organization -- just two families (Nuttings and Johnsons) and a full-time secretary (Donna Henderson) -- but God has provided some great volunteers to help out from time to time. Often we are tired from the work load and feel stretched to the limits, but God faithfully supplies all our needs.

For quite some time, we have had a vision to expand the outreach through training others. Now God is bringing it to pass, and **we're excited to watch as His plan unfolds in at least two specific ways.**

First, in March this year, the offices of Alpha Omega Institute were moved into a modest, but functional facility which will allow for the first phase of this ministry expansion -- an **area-wide Creation Resource Center and Lending Library**. We are thrilled that Dorothy Hahn, a long-time friend of this ministry, has joined our staff in September to direct the development of this center. Our dream is to make it a model which can be reproduced to provide creation resources and training in many communities across this nation. We envision the center including a lending library for books and videos, a bookstore carrying a variety of creation resources, a small "hands-on" "Discovery Center," and the home offices of AOI. We plan to offer special classes, family nights, "Creation Clubs," and assistance for students and others who are getting bombarded with evolution.

Second, AOI has launched an "Internship Program" with our first two "official" interns: Sarah McGuire from Virginia and Rich Stepanak from Minnesota. Rich and Sarah will be trained via individualized programs designed to insure a good grasp of the creation issue and to develop their unique ministry giftings and abilities. Rich is primarily interested in adult and general audiences while Sarah loves working with children.

The Intern Program will consist of studying selected books and videos, observing and helping with seminars, developing ministry programs (e.g. slide shows, puppet skits, etc.), and gaining practical ministry experience. Graduates of this program will be well-prepared to do creation ministry within their local church, their community, churches, schools, or on the mission field. A certificate of completion will be available through Alpha Omega Institute and the possibility of college credit for the internship is being investigated.

We are excited by what God is doing! We praise Him for His work! Please **join us in THANKING HIM** and asking for His continued guidance and blessing.



*New staff member, Dorothy Hahn (left) with Mary Jo
Welcome aboard, Dorothy!*

Spotlight On Science

Origin of Life

The question of life's origin has intrigued scientists and laymen for hundreds of years. The Bible gives a simple answer -- God created all the various types of living things in a period of six days -- but many people are unwilling to accept this simple explanation. Instead, they have come up with all sorts of explanations to explain the mystery of life without a supernatural Creator.

The most widely-accepted idea is that life arose under a reducing atmosphere (an atmosphere lacking free oxygen). Supposedly electrical discharges in the atmosphere caused the formation of the "building blocks of life" -- relatively simple organic molecules like amino acids, simple sugars, and nitrogenous bases. These supposedly fell into the oceans and were later washed ashore and concentrated in tidal pools. They were then dried (how?), heated to a very specific high temperature for a specific amount of time (how?), washed (how?), and cooled again. This fantastic sequence of events supposedly resulted in more and more complex molecules which eventually came together to form "microspheres" which turned into the first living cells (another huge leap of faith).

Obviously, this is a simplified summary of the model, but it gives the general idea -- somehow non-living molecules turn into living cells. Despite many scientific problems, this model has been widely-accepted and frequently published as "fact" in the textbooks for years. Stanley Miller's experiments in the early 1950's are usually given as "evidence" to show that simple organic compounds could be formed by electrical discharges passing through a "reducing atmosphere," but there are many problems relating these experiments to supposed conditions on the early earth.

Lately, the "reducing atmosphere" hypothesis has been coming under increasing scrutiny. Two other ideas are now growing in popularity. The first says that life evolved deep in the oceans in the "sludge" around hydrothermal vents. The second, called panspermia, says that life did not begin on earth, but came here from someplace out in space. Some people speculate that the earth was "contaminated" when aliens visited the earth sometime in the distant past. Others say that life on earth was deliberately "seeded" by space-creatures from a distant galaxy. Neither idea comes close to answering how life arose; they merely push it out in space or deep in the ocean where they don't have to deal with the problem.

Students, when you are taught about the origin of life, ask: "What's the evidence?" "Who was there?" "Has it ever been observed?" "If so, what do these laboratory experiments have to do with conditions on the early earth?" (Nobody is just dumping chemicals together at random and coming up with living cells!) Think about it! Who would you rather believe, scientists who weren't there or God who was?

Life in Space?

Life in space is a popular science fiction theme, but "What's the evidence?" Scientists have been searching for years, but thus far all leads have fizzled.

Now there is a new prospect for "evidence." A **Rocky Mountain News** (8/8/96) article contained the amazing claim, "NASA has provided the first serious evidence of past microbes on Mars." The pictures and text explained how a large object hit the planet Mars 16 million years ago and knocked loose a piece of rock which flew through space and eventually landed on Earth. Though the article did indicate that there was a great deal of speculation, how many people read only the headlines and ended up believing that life has been found on Mars?

The potato-sized meteorite was actually discovered way back in 1984, but it wasn't until recently that some circular and rod-shaped patterns which looked somewhat like fossils of "nanobacteria" were found in it. These, coupled with certain types of pyrite ("fool's gold"), led some researchers to postulate possible organic activity.

How sure are they of their findings? Not very! Many researchers are not at all convinced that the meteorite contains fossils, since the same forms can be found in rocks which are definitely not fossiliferous. As far as the ratio of different types of pyrite being a real clincher, it too is disputed by experts in the field. One stated that ". . . the ratio points in the opposite direction from the one that indicates biological activity."

So what do we suggest? Sit tight and wait for further developments. The evidence is at best inconclusive. The initial media hype often fades into obscurity after more research and many questions remain. How do we even know for sure the rock is from Mars? Are there other possible sources? Are the "fossils" really the remains of living organisms, or could they be some sort of inorganic deposit or feature in the rock? Is contamination by Earth organisms a possibility?

Why are evolutionists so convinced there is life in space anyway? Remember, they believe that life is a product of natural processes. If life evolved on Earth, it probably also evolved elsewhere in the universe. Since they think some galaxies are older than ours, life in some parts of the universe might have begun much earlier than life on Earth, and thus might be much more advanced than us. Maybe we are not "alone" in space!

Personally, although we can't dogmatically quote chapter and verse, we don't believe there is physical life in space. God made the **earth** "to be inhabited." He set the sun, moon, and stars in the heavens "for signs and for seasons" on the earth. More importantly, He sent His Son to this earth, to die for human beings. Jesus died once for sin, and now lives eternally to save those who come to Him in faith. Someday He will come again and take us to His heavenly home. We are looking forward to that day!

Notes & Quotes

■ Romans 1 tells us God has made His existence and character so evident in the world He created that those who deny Him are “without excuse.” It goes on to tell us that when people do not glorify Him as God and are not thankful, He “gives them up” to uncleanness, vileness, reprobate minds, and all sorts of evil. It’s easy to read these passages and say, “Wow! Those guys are really bad!” but what about us? **Do we really glorify and honor God as God all the time? Are we really thankful in everything?** Think about it! Here are some things we at Alpha Omega Institute thank God for:

- ✓ His great love and faithfulness.
- ✓ His power and wisdom exhibited in Creation.
 - ✓ His victory at the Cross over sin and death.
 - ✓ His daily provision for all our needs.
 - ✓ His majesty displayed in the heavens.
 - ✓ His intimate knowledge of all our ways.
- ✓ Our generous supporters and faithful prayer partners.
 - ✓ Opportunities to share the Creation message.
 - ✓ Friends of Turkey mission (our landlords).
 - ✓ Our Board of Directors.
 - ✓ Interns who will further spread the message.
 - ✓ Safety over many thousands of miles of travel.
- ✓ Parents and others who bring kids to our seminars.
 - ✓ Teachers and students who “stand firm.”
 - ✓ Abundant evidence of Creation.
 - ✓ God’s power changing lives.
 - ✓ Our families and friends.
 - ✓ Volunteers who help stuff and label this newsletter.
- ✓ Churches which welcome this message and teach truth.
- ✓ People who provide hospitality for us on road trips.
- ✓ Institute for Creation Research and Answers in Genesis.
 - ✓ Other faithful creation ministries.
 - ✓ Godly pastors.
 - ✓ Seminar coordinators and volunteers.
- ✓ Jesus, God’s GREATEST GIFT of love.

■ What a helpful exercise! We surely do have a LOT to be THANKFUL for! We encourage you to take some time this holiday season to meditate on God’s goodness. Make a list on your own or with your family. Then take some time just to GLORIFY GOD and GIVE THANKS!

■ *Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves ... Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.*

(Ps. 100:3a, 4, 5)

■ A reader from Illinois writes:

✓ You know, a thought occurred to me a few months after your seminar that is so simple, I can’t believe I didn’t think of it or see it before. *It all comes down to Jesus.* If you believe in Jesus, I mean honestly and truly, and if you believe that He is indeed exactly who He said He is, and if you believe in the things He believed in, you have no choice but to accept Genesis as written. Jesus did. Jesus preached creation as it was laid out in Genesis. As for those rainbow Bible people who question it’s authenticity, and who the “real” author of Genesis was ... Jesus had no problem with that. Moses. He said so himself. Period. The end. If Jesus could take the book of Genesis at face value, I guess I can to. I know that may be close-minded for the more “enlightened” people of this age, but that’s faith.

■ Amen. This really is the bottom line: who knows better, the Creator Who was there, or people (even well-educated ones) who weren’t?

✓ *For by him [Jesus] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* (Colossians 1:16,17)

■ That settles it! He ought to know! But isn’t it neat that true **observations** of science **agree** with the Bible? It is only the evolutionary **interpretations** of the evidence that don’t fit.

■ Our nation used to embrace the truth in its schools. Unfortunately, that isn’t often the case anymore. Witness the stir that Danny Phillips, a high school student in the Denver area, started when he complained to the School Board about a video showing evolution as fact? When the Board agreed with him that evolution should not be presented as “fact” and removed the video from the curriculum, the ACLU jumped in. It looks like they won’t even settle for calling evolution a **theory**; they want it presented as **fact**. Talk about David and Goliath -- ACLU vs. a 15 year-old student! Way to go, Danny. Hang in there. Please pray for Danny and the on-going battle for truth.

■ Final Note: Aren’t you glad our great Creator cared enough for us that He came to earth in human form and took our sins upon Himself at Calvary? This holiday season, take some time to meditate upon and thank Him for His this amazing gift of love.

Discover Creation

A **Discover Creation** seminar will help you and your family:

- ❑ **Discover answers** about creation, evolution, science, and the Bible.
- ❑ **Relate** the teachings of Genesis to issues facing church and society today.
- ❑ **Learn** to recognize evolutionary bias in textbooks, museums, media, and national parks.
- ❑ **Arm yourselves** with scientific evidence supporting Genesis.
- ❑ **Stand firm & defend** your faith with gentleness and confidence.

We are **now scheduling seminars, camps, and VBS** for 1997. Contact us soon if you'd like one in your community! We'll send you an information pack to share with your pastor or group leader.

Special Prayer Request

The Nuttings have been asked to speak in **ALBANIA March 8-23, 1997**. Albania was formerly the most atheistic nation on earth -- now it is open to the Gospel. This is an exciting opportunity! Please begin praying now. Pray that God would prepare hearts to receive the message. Also pray for logistics (scheduling, travel plans, etc.) and financial provision for the trip. Contact us if you can help. Thanks!

Advance Announcement: 1997 Creation Vacation Family Camps

Twin Peaks Family Science Adventure: June 29-July 4
Redcloud Family Mountain Adventure I: August 10-15
Redcloud Family Mountain Adventure II: August 17-22

Mark your calendar. Plan **NOW** to attend.
Write or call for **Registration Brochure!**

Please Note:

We do not intend to use valuable resources to send out a special year-end financial appeal, but be assured that if you wish to include AOI in your year-end giving, it would be much appreciated. Thanks again! Take time to enjoy the Lord, family, and friends this holiday season.

Think and Believe is published bi-monthly by Alpha Omega Institute, P.O. Box 4343, Grand Junction, CO 81502. Editors: Dave & Mary Jo Nutting. Single copies are free upon request. Please write for permission to reprint material in this publication. Alpha Omega Institute is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your donations are much needed and appreciated.

Meet our New Staff and Interns

Dorothy Hahn has a B.S. in Biology and will soon complete her M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction. She taught secondary school biology for several years, worked as a biologist for the Bureau of Land Management and the US Dept of Fish and Wildlife, and worked for a Christian radio station. Dorothy has been involved as a volunteer for many years with AOI. She initiated the Alpha Omega Science Fair 10 years ago and directed it for several years. Dorothy has two married sons and one grandson. She desires to see the Lord work through her to establish a Resource Center and Library that will glorify Him and edify His Body.

Rich Stepanek is from Ruthton, Minnesota. He has been studying creation intensively since first hearing a creation seminar several years ago. He has made several mission trips to Russia where he had the opportunity to share the creation message. Rich hopes to increase his knowledge and presentation skills through the Intern Program and is seeking the Lord's direction regarding future ministry options. Rich's family includes his wife, Sue, son Ryan, daughter Kim, and 2 adopted daughters from Guatemala, Abby and Claudia.



Sarah McGuire is from Ruckersville, Virginia. She is the 20 years old and is a homeschool graduate. Sarah has been interested in creation since she was 6 years old. She has a special love for children and for the Lord, and is looking forward to increasing her knowledge and ministry skills through this internship.

Holiday Greetings from all of us at AOI

We want to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very blessed time of rejoicing in the Lord this holiday season and to thank all of you who have participated in this ministry through prayer, financial contributions, or volunteer work.

We really appreciate it!



Alpha Omega Institute

P. O. Box 4343

Grand Junction, CO 81502

(970) 523-9943