



UNITED LEBANESE ORGANIZATION

2011  
JANUARY

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

### *A Cry for Love*

While most of us were celebrating New Year's Eve earlier this month, evil had a different agenda at a Coptic church in Egypt, where a deadly explosion killed at least 21 people and injured hundred others. The scene is said to be one of sectarian tensions. Christian protestors are quoted as chanting religious slogans, such as "With our body and blood we will defend the cross!" Meanwhile, Muslim groups are quoted as chanting "Allahu Akbar!" (God is great), which is an historic Islamic battle cry. Is this what we need now? The answer is of course, NO. The universal human constitution is to cry for justice. This is an unassailable pillar of civilization, that law is respected and lawbreakers punished. Yet at times like this, people of faith must supersede the desire for justice with the cry for love. Justice must not be neglected, and Christians have worthy fears they may once again be disappointed. Most Muslims I know decry violence in the name of their religion, and more generally in the name of humanity. A cry for love must include justice, but it must carefully differentiate. A cry for love must also seek reconciliation and unity. This is a monumental, perhaps superhuman task. But in times of crisis the choices are clear. Members of both faiths will shrink back into their own communities and assumptions about the other, or, less negatively but equally futilely curse the darkness that is encompassing them as they band together with interreligious friends. Or else they may find the only meaning possible in suffering, which is the hope of redemption. It is the cry for love that can prevent a heart-hardening emphasis on justice and seek the freedom of those enslaved by violence and its various ideologies. Justice is necessary; interreligious friendship is vital. But love expressed tangibly to the least deserving is transformational.

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### ULO New Year's Eve Celebration



Good times and good music overflowed in Irvine on New Year's Eve as hundreds celebrated the beginning of a new decade. The celebration that started at 8:00 PM and ended at the early hours of the New Year was highlighted by the traditional Arabic music and dances, with the best Lebanese food and Mezza. Fadi Ghattas, Ahmad & Rawa Shamroukh, and other ULO members greeted party goers at the door, and addressed the crowd wishing them the best in 2011.



### HELP US HELP YOU

Join ULO and become a member by visiting our website [www.UnitedLebanese.org](http://www.UnitedLebanese.org) . We are looking forward for your participation.

### UPCOMING EVENT

ULO Valentine's dinner & dance on February 12th.



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## DID YOU KNOW...

### *New Year Trivia Questions*

**The New Year has not always been celebrated on January 1. When did the original celebration take place?**

A: Starting around the year 2000 B.C., the Babylonians observed the beginning of spring as the start of a new year.

**Q: Who established January 1 as the start of a New Year?**

A: Julius Caesar, who did so when he created the Juliun calendar

**Q: Who established the tradition of setting New Year's resolutions?**

A: The Babylonians, whose most common resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment.

**Q: What is the most popular New Year's resolution in the United States today?**

A: To lose weight

**Q: Which city hosts the first major New Year's Eve celebration each year?**

A: Sydney, Australia

**Q: What year did the first New Year's Eve ball drop in Times Square?**

A: 1907

## BOOK REVIEW

### *A World I Loved: The Story of An Arab Woman.*

*By Wadad Makdlsi Cortas*

"This is my story, the story of an Arab woman. It is the story of a lost world. It begins in 1917, in Lebanon, when I was seven years old." So opens this haunting memoir by Wadad Makdlsi Cortas, who eloquently describes her personal experience of the events that have fractured the Middle East over the past century. Through Cortas' eyes we experience life in Lebanon under the oppressive French mandate, and her desire to forge an Arab identity based on religious tolerance. We learn of her dedication to the education of women, and the difficulties that she overcomes to become the principal of a school in Lebanon. And in final, heartbreaking detail, we watch as her world becomes rent by the "Palestine question," Western interference, and civil war. "The World I Loved" is both an elegy on Lebanon and her people, and the unforgettable story of one woman's journey from hope to sorrow as she bears painful witness to the undoing of her beloved country by sectarian and religious division.

## COMMUNITY TALK

### WHAT'S NEW

In an effort to improve communication with its members and the community, and in the wake of many requests, ULO is announcing an easier way to contribute: effective immediately, you can renew your membership, make a donation, or purchase tickets for upcoming events through VISA, MASTER CARD, DISCOVER, DEBIT CARD, and PayPal by going to ULO's website, [www.unitedlebanese.org](http://www.unitedlebanese.org). It is an easy, convenient, secure & trusted way transact with ULO. Try it for our upcoming Valentine's Party!!

### *Celebrate Valentine's Night with The United Lebanese Organization.*

Saturday February 12<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 pm to Midnight  
Dinner and DJ Music

Aliso Viejo Conference Center / Club.  
31 Santa Barbara drive  
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656

Member: \$40

Guest: \$45

For more information visit our website  
at <http://www.UnitedLebanese.org> or  
Call 412-LEBNANI