

WFWP, USA

Where American women meet the world.



Women's Federation for World Peace, USA E-Newsletter

Late Summer/2008

Mission Statement

Women working together to establish a culture of heart in the family, community and the world in order to achieve genuine and sustainable peace under God

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It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it.

Eleanor Roosevelt

Dear WFWP,

We hope you enjoy this edition of the WFWP ENews!

WFWPI at the UN ECOSOC Innovation Fair



For the second time in as many years, the Women's Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI) was invited to be part of the United Nations Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) Innovation Fair. This fair is organized to showcase the worldwide projects of various groups as well as to garner the

interest and support of various civil and social networks.

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2008 WFWP & IRFF Youth Service Trip to Haiti

The Women's Federation for World Peace, USA partnered with the International Relief Friendship Foundation (IRFF) to sponsor two weeks of service and learning in Haiti from June 15 - 30. Fourteen students and volunteers from WFWP and the University of South Florida were joined by 23 others, including representatives from the Coalition of Haitian



Doctors.

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1% Love Share:

The History of the North-South Korea Conflict

The end of World War II in 1945 also marked the end of a repressive forty-year occupation of the Korean peninsula by the Japanese

U.S. First Lady
(1884-1967)

government. Koreans participated in the worldwide euphoria following V-J Day, but their nation was soon divided by the United States and the Soviet Union. The 38th parallel in the middle of the country became the demarcation line between communist-controlled North Korea, under the leadership of Kim Il-Sung, and the US-occupied South Korea, under President Syngman Rhee.

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Reflections: 16th Assembly Panel Discussion

The WFWP, USA National Assembly in April in New Jersey, was chock full of activities. One of the most informative of these was a panel discussion that profiled four main WFWP-USA projects. The programs and presenters were: The Interracial Sisterhood Project, by Suzanne Mulcahy; Women's Middle East Peace Initiative, by Susan Fefferman; Marriage and Family Initiative, by Debby Gullery and Schools of Africa Project, by Alexa Ward.



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The Peace Dove Came Dressed in Green

Dr. Katrin Michael's Trip to Iraq

Dr Katrin Michael was born to a Catholic family in Alqosh, a Christian village located in northern Iraq. Early on, her academic achievements allowed her the opportunity to study engineering in Russia. Upon her return home, she experienced firsthand Saddam Hussein's severe discrimination against particular ethnic and religious groups. A nearby village became the first to be gassed under his orders on June 5, 1987. The poison gas attacks killed and maimed hundreds of thousands of people. To this day, Dr. Katrin suffers both physical and psychological side effects from these attacks.

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Katrin Michael

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Dr. Katrin returned to Iraq (Sep 11, 2006) for the first time in 19 years to testify against Saddam, his regime, and the foreign companies that supplied the chemicals used to gas the Iraqi people, as well as to speak out on behalf of the minority refugees. She is currently living in Virginia, writing and working for peace and justice. Since 2004, Dr. Katrin Michael has been a member of Women's Federation for World Peace, the Women's Middle East Peace Initiative, and serves as an Ambassador for Peace for the Universal Peace Federation.

The Peace Dove Came Dressed in Green

During Saddam Hussein's 24-year reign, over one million Kurdish Shiites were arrested and driven from their homes. Ninety percent of those arrested were from wealthy, educated families, owning businesses and property. These arrests usually took place in the middle of the night and the men would be separated from their families. The women and children were forcibly removed from their homes, transported and left at the Iranian border – many with no shoes, dressed only in their nightclothes. Half a million refugees have struggled to survive on the border for three decades; another half million managed to escape and resettle in other parts of the world.



Iraqi Refugees

Recently, many of the missing men's remains have been identified at mass gravesites. Even though Saddam's regime was toppled, the refugees have continued to



linguish, mistreated by Iran, seemingly forgotten and abandoned by the rest of the world. The plight of these displaced people was the reason Dr. Katrin Michael traveled to Iraq in September of 2006. During this trip, she and other Iraqi intellectuals made appeals to political and religious leaders on behalf of the Kurdish refugees.

Dr. Katrin is well known throughout the Middle East for her insightful articles regarding the Iraqi government. She has continued to work towards freedom and justice for the voiceless and to protect the rights of women and children throughout the region. As such, she was invited to make this journey to Iraq with eight Iraqi men who felt her presence was important to their cause; Dr. Katrin was the only woman and the only non-Muslim in the delegation.

On their first day in Iraq, the group met with Masood Barzani, president of the autonomous Kurdistan region, and the Iraqi prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki. After five days in the Kurdistan capital of Irbil, they travelled to Baghdad for a hearing with the Iraqi Parliament. They strongly chastised the government for its lack of attention to the refugees, and their words were accepted without rebuttal.

The delegation travelled south to meet with the highest-ranking Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, in the city of Najaf. By this point, the group included two women from Parliament. They were able to meet with Iraqi president, Jalal Talabani



The Green Zone

and his wife; Prime Minister Barzani; Cardinal Emmanuel Dalli, leader of the biggest Christian community in Iraq; and numerous other leaders from different political parties. The media followed every movement of this small but significant group as they passed through a variety of environs. They went through the Green Zone, a U.S.-protected area housing the American embassy and much of the Iraqi government. At that time, it was a dangerous area with on-going shelling. They also travelled through the capital of Baghdad, where life seemed to have returned mostly to normal. The Western public is well aware of the sensational and tragic events in Iraq, but is largely uninformed about the small victories achieved in a return to normalcy.

Dr. Katrin stopped a young, unveiled woman on a Baghdad street asking after her safety, and the young woman reassured the whole group that she was fine. For Dr. Katrin, it was both a surprise and a relief to see Baghdad doing so well; there was the welcome bustle of thriving commerce, women travelling safely in modest western clothes, and lots of traffic clogging the streets. The team even drove down Haifa Street, which had previously been a terrorist center.

The delegation had such successful meetings on behalf of the refugees that councils from other minority groups asked them for similar representation. Dr. Katrin and her associates decided to extend their stay and they spoke on behalf of Shabaks, Yezidis, Mandians, Christians and others, remaining in Iraq for a total of six months.

People in Iraq told Dr. Katrin that she appeared as a white dove of peace in their time of need. The beautiful, long-sleeved green dress that she wore when she arrived was donated, per request, to a museum in memory of this historic visit. Many will long remember the tremendous hope that this small delegation offered them. For the first time in a very long period, minorities felt that their needs had been heard by those in power.

To Dr. Katrin Michael and your eight friends, we honor and applaud your unselfish, heroic efforts. If you would like to know how to support Dr. Katrin Michael's humanitarian work, please contact her by emailing us at info@wfwf.us.



Dr. Katrin Michael in a meeting with the President at the White House



The end of World War II in 1945 also marked the end of a repressive forty-year occupation of the Korean peninsula by the Japanese government. Koreans participated in the worldwide euphoria following V-J Day, but their nation was soon divided by the United States and the Soviet Union. The 38th parallel in the middle of the country became the demarcation line between communist-controlled North Korea, under the leadership of Kim Il-Sung, and the US-occupied South Korea, under President Syngman Rhee.

A fragile peace was broken in June of 1950 with an invasion of the South by North Korean troops, assisted and armed by the Soviets and Chinese. These attacks took the South Korean and American troops by surprise and they were not able to effectively respond until the North Korean army had already reached the southernmost region of the peninsula. Refugees desperately fled south to escape the invasion, but many were killed or taken

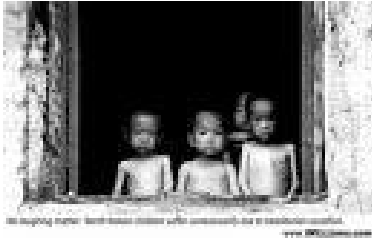


Refugees escaping the invasion



across the 38th parallel, but not until after three years of fighting and the loss of an estimated four million lives. The fighting eventually turned into a stalemate and a cease-fire armistice was signed on July 27, 1953. Yet, a peace treaty could not be brokered and so the Korean War continues today with armed troops facing one another at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on the 38th parallel.

The North, with the support of the USSR and China, adopted a “self-reliant” style of communist government under the charismatic rule of the first president, Kim Il-Sung. The North’s close ideological, military and economic alliances with other communist countries allowed the country to prosper for a number of years. Yet when the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, it was a major blow to the North, both economically and militarily. The loss of Soviet support coupled with a severe drought resulted in a widespread famine throughout much of the decade. An unknown number of North Koreans died as a result.



In 2006, Amnesty International reported that a national nutrition survey conducted by the North Korean government, the World Food Programme, and UNICEF found that 7 percent of children were severely malnourished; 37 percent were chronically malnourished; 23.4 percent were underweight; and one in three mothers was malnourished and anemic as the result of the lingering effect of the famine in the 1990s.

In 2001, under the leadership of the president of WFWP International, Dr. Lan Young Moon, WFWP chapters in Korea started the *North Korea One Percent Love Sharing Project*. This is an effort to build a foundation for the unification of North and South Korea by helping hungry women and children. It asks participants to set aside 1000 won (less than 1 USD) every month to help the needy in the North.

At the WFWP, USA National Assembly in New Jersey in April, Dr. Moon spoke about the situation in the north. She stated, “In 2001, for the first time in 50 years, I was able to visit North Korea as one of ten women leaders. I was shocked by the desperate situation... I felt tears rising as I realized what a very long way we had to go before unification could come



about. We were shown to the best showcase kindergarten in Pyongyang. The children were of course well-dressed and well-trained, but they were slight and small for their age....”

Dr. Moon has since visited North Korea several times. Women’s organizations there have met with her and other South Korean women. In October 2007, a contingent of 700 women from around the world attended the annual WFWP International Leadership Convention in Seoul, and then traveled to North Korea to meet with women leaders there.



WFWP International Leadership Conference in North Korea, October 2007. Dr. Lan Young Moon, far right. Alexa Ward, WFWP, USA President, second from left. WFWP women in the audience are wearing purple shirts.

Overcoming decades of division and hostility cannot be achieved overnight. WFWP is committed to serving the needy women and children of the north and thereby creating a climate of trust which can help melt the hearts of former enemies.

We hope you will actively join the 1% Love Share Program, which is unique to WFWP. This is a way we can put into practice “living for others,” and begin to build a bridge of unity between people in North and South Korea. Overseas donors are welcome to send one year’s contribution (minimum one dollar per month, or \$12) per person. Each chapter can collect donations and send them in together to save on bank charges. For more information, contact info@wfwp.us

WFWP, USA Projects

The WFWP, USA National Assembly in April in New Jersey, was chock full of activities. One of the most informative of these was a panel discussion that profiled four main WFWP-USA projects. The programs and presenters were:

The Interracial Sisterhood Project, by Suzanne Mulcahy
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Marriage and Family Initiative, by Debby Gullery
Schools of Africa Project, by Alexa Ward



L to R: Suzanne Mulcahy, Susan Fefferman, Debby Gullery

The Interracial Sisterhood Project

Suzanne Mulcahy



Suzanne Mulcahy, a school psychologist in northern California, serves as the national director of the ***Interracial Sisterhood Project (ISP)***. Suzanne has a passion for nurturing young people and began working with WFWP in the mid-1990s. She spoke at the Assembly about various ISP programs she and other WFWP members have developed. These include ***Bridge of Peace ceremonies*** held in northern and southern California that have brought together women across the ethnic spectrum. One of the largest of these was at the Los Angeles Convention Center in 1996, at a time when racial tensions were particularly high in that area. Five hundred and fifty women attended this particular program.



ISP Bridge of Peace ceremony



ISP Group in Northern California

The ISP has held interracial Bridge of Peace ceremonies in various colleges and also in the Cerritos Unified School District. High school students there were able to cross the Bridge of Peace and form bonds of friendship with other students from different ethnic groups. This has helped to alleviate the tensions in those schools. As Ms. Mulcahy puts it, “When high school girls form good relationships across racial

divides, boys tend to follow. Women, too, can lead the way in society toward greater harmony among the men.”

For more information on the Interracial Sisterhood Project, go to www.ispbridge.com

Women’s Middle East Peace Initiative

Susan Fefferman

Washington, DC-area resident, Susan Fefferman, serves as national director of the Women’s Middle East Peace Initiative. During her segment, she described the history and current activities of the program. A *Declaration for Peace* signature campaign was launched in January 2004 with three main purposes: “To support the women of the Middle East both at home and abroad; to turn the hearts and minds of women worldwide to the ongoing crisis in the Middle East; and to encourage women to use their God-given nature to contribute to lasting peace in that region, as well as throughout the world.”



Women of Peace gathered in Jerusalem, May 2004



International Women’s Day participants in Washington, DC

By the end of that first year, more than ten million signatures had been gathered from around the world, among them such notables as U.S. Congresswomen Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX) and Sheila Jackson Lee (TX); the mayor of the City of Los Angeles; the mayor of Washington, DC; Dr. Massouda Jallal, Afghan Minister of Women’s Affairs.

In May of 2004, more than 500 women participated in the “Women of Peace” reconciliation initiative in Jerusalem. The women visited hospitals, met with both Jewish

and Palestinian people, and participated in a Bridge of Peace sisterhood ceremony.

In honor of the UN's International Women's Day on March 8th each year, Women's Middle East Peace Initiative programs are held in Washington, DC. These programs highlight the unique role women can play as peacemakers. Future plans include expanding the Women's Middle East Peace Initiative to other areas of the US and encourage women to participate in future trips to the Middle East, and to promote reconciliation through outreach and education.

Marriage and Family Initiative

Debby Gullery



*Debby Gullery speaking at a **Marriage and Family** workshop*

New York resident Debby Gullery serves as national director of the WFWP, USA **Marriage and Family Initiative**, another key program highlighted at the Assembly. Debby stated, "We strongly believe that the family is the school of love, and that parents are the primary educators of the child's heart, where all learning begins. Also, the strength of a family depends on the strength of the marriage... Unfortunately, America is no longer a marriage-friendly nation."

The Marriage and Family Initiative is actively helping people to gain greater success in their marriages and families. Using practical, research-based techniques, Debby leads workshops that teach relationship skills to engaged couples, as well as to long-married couples wishing to enhance and enrich their relationship.

Debby stressed that the workshops employ simple tools that do not require a long time or wrenching emotional upheavals. Sometimes it is as simple as learning to respond differently to perceived slights.

People are also taught to examine their own unrealistic expectations of the marriage, which can alleviate tension between the spouses.

Parents are the
primary educators
of heart



Presentation slide, ©Marriage and Family Initiative

Schools of Africa Project

Alexa Ward

The final panel presentation was given by Alexa Ward, president of WFWP, USA, who spoke about the Schools of Africa project.



WFWP, USA is committed to financially supporting seven schools that were established and developed in Africa by WFWP, International. These schools are located in Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, and Uganda (2). WFWP, USA regional chapters have held benefits to raise funds for the maintenance and expansion of these schools. Types of benefits have included: concerts, a fashion show, dinner programs, afternoon teas, and raffles. Scholarship programs have been established for two of the schools, providing much needed ongoing support for tuition.

Alexa Ward speaking about the Piggy Bank project to support the Schools of Africa

In 2007, the “Fill Me Up for Peace,” piggy bank project was launched around the USA. The little plastic banks are distributed to individuals and families, who fill them up to support the Schools of Africa. This popular program is helping defray the costs of the WFWP, USA service trip in which young women go to Africa and visit selected schools to do repair and construction work. Last summer, the program sent five young women and their chaperone to Kenya.



WFWP, USA group that went to Kenya in 2007

The next issue of WFWP ENews will include a report on this year’s Summer Youth Service Trip to Zambia.

All these projects are currently ongoing and need your commitment and support. If you would like to know more or get involved, you can look on our website at www.wfwp.us; email us at info@wfwp.us or call our office M-F 9 to 5 PM (EST) at (203)333-5572.



WFWPI Showcases Project at the United Nations Innovation Fair

For the second time in as many years, Women's Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI) was invited to be part of the United Nations Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) Innovation Fair. This fair is organized to showcase the worldwide projects of various groups as well as to garner the interest and support of various civil and social networks.

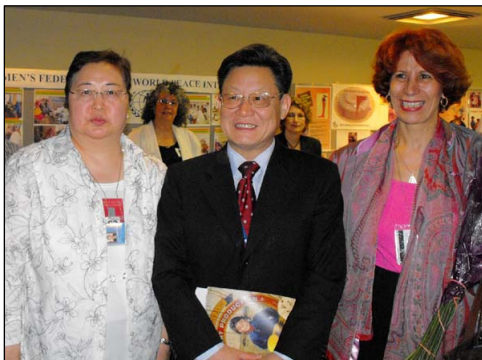


Inside the UN ECOSOC general meeting room
From left to right: Noriko Heying, Phyllis Kim, Lorato Rampo, Motoko Sugiyama, Karen Smith, Cynthia Shibuya, Kay Suqiyama

WFWPI has been recognized by the UN as a non-governmental organization (NGO) with General Consultative status since 1997. Currently only 139 groups in the world hold this status at the UN.



In order to maintain ECOSOC General Consultative status, the organization must have programs serving the neediest people, especially those in the developing countries. They must substantially contribute to the achievement of the UN's eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which range from cutting in half extreme world poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education by the year 2015. These goals are a blueprint for all the world's countries and leading institutions. Unprecedented efforts are being made by organizations and governments to lift up the poorest people of the world. For a complete list of the MDGs, go to <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>



In 2007, the UN ECOSOC held its first Innovation Fair during the Annual Ministerial Review in Geneva. Selected organizations set up information tables to display their programs. Here the NGOs were able to interface directly with diplomats and ministers from many countries about their programs and projects that aim to accomplish the Millennium Development Goals. (For a report on last year's Innovation Fair, see WFWP ENews, Autumn 2007.)

(L to r) Motoko Sugiyama, Director of WFWPI UN Office, Mr. Sha Zukang, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs; Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of the NGO Section



Working at the WFWPI Information Table

This year, the Innovation Fair was held from June 30 to July 3rd at the UN Headquarters in New York City, and thirteen NGOs were chosen to participate. Among them were: Dianova International, Barcelona, Spain, for their program helping adolescents overcome drug abuse; the Institute of International Social Development, Kolhata, India, for their income-generating activities for poor families; the Brazilian Foundation of America, helping people earn money through ecologically-friendly soap and other products.

All the practices on display at the Innovation Fair were required to be self-sustaining; they must be much more than simply charity programs. The ultimate goal behind the aid programs is to have the recipients maintain, grow and develop the program beyond its current state. Many projects involve the training of teachers, nurses and engineers or they may train entrepreneurs to set up small businesses. In short, they all involve helping people help themselves.

Achievement of the MDGs is a slow, painstaking process. WFWPI has been working on various educational and medical programs since 1994, when volunteers first went out to work with the world's poor. Since then, WFWPI has established grassroots programs in more than 50 nations. They continue to find ways to create simple, practical, and workable methods that ordinary people can use to improve their own and others' lives.



WFWP has a clear philosophical framework centering on what is called the "logic of love". This involves the recognition that the rights of human beings are derived from their essential nature, which is both spiritual and physical. The concerns of the human spirit – love, compassion, trust, desire for self-improvement, and so forth – are central to all the programs of WFWP. WFWP does not focus on simply alleviating physical poverty. Rather, there must be a spiritual dimension to the effort. Respect for each person's dignity, based on the knowledge that all people are part of "one human family," guides all the programs of WFWP. So there is a "priority of heart" that transcends differences of nationality, ethnicity, and religion behind everything done by WFWP, both internationally and in the USA. (See www.wfwp.org for more information on international activities.)

Women from the WFWP, USA chapters of New Jersey and New York worked at UN headquarters during the Innovation Fair and were able to attend some of the sessions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). WFWP members staffed the display table, which highlighted WFWPI's program in Niger and Senegal, among others.



Niger is one of the poorest nations in the world, and when the first WFWP volunteer arrived there in 1994, the mortality rates for pregnant women and children under five were among the worst in the world. The number one cause of death in Niger is malaria, which is both easily preventable and treatable. Yet, in most areas, doctors are able to visit only once a year so the program focuses primarily on prevention. The program provides low-cost mosquito netting for pregnant women and their children. The WFWP volunteers also give out boxes with medicines for treating malaria in its early stages, when it is more controllable.



In Senegal, WFWP offers a four-year educational program at the JAMOO Social Self-Support Assistance Center in the capital city of Dakar. JAMOO means “bringing peace” in the local language. Here women aged 12 to 40 learn dressmaking, knitting and embroidery skills. They also learn business skills necessary to market their handicrafts. Upon graduation, each participant is given a new sewing machine to use in their entrepreneurial efforts. Since the center opened in 1995, over one thousand women have graduated.



While this year’s Innovation Fair was centered on “sustainable development,” next year’s will be focused on the goal of improving global public health. To learn more about this year’s Innovation Fair, go to <http://www.amrif2008.blogspot.com>. For more information about WFWP’s involvement, go to www.wfwp.org.