

**In This Issue**

- 8th WFWPI Leaders Conference
- WFWP, USA Leadership Retreat
- Peacemakers for Sacred Healing
- Ethiopia, Israel and Sewing Machines
- Fill Me Up For Peace Initiative

**Thoughts on Peace**



***Eighth WFWP International Leaders Conference***

*By Alexa Ward, WFWP, USA President*

The 8th WFWP International Leaders Workshop and the WFWP International Women Leaders Convention took place from October 28 through November 1, 2007, at the Cheong-a Camp in Cheong Pyeong, South Korea, and at Mount Kungang, North Korea. Seven hundred leaders took part under the theme, "Women's Leadership in Building God's Civilization and New World." The American delegation included sixty-five women.

*The world of peace is not initially accomplished on the global or even national level. Peace must first be realized in the individual and in the family because these form the basis for all human organizations and systems.*

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon,  
Founder, Women's  
Federation for World Peace

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***WFWP, USA Leadership Winter Retreat***

***A New Beginning and One Step Higher***

*By Laura Hornbeck*

*WFWP Texas Coordinator*

District, state, and city leaders of WFWP, USA met for their annual retreat over the weekend of January 19-21, the Martin Luther King holiday. Seeking a good location for the gathering, the travel agent was given several criteria: it had to be ice and snow-free; centrally located for affordable airfare; and the costs had to fit within a nonprofit budget.

Put all those into a computer and where do you find the best deals in the middle of winter? Houston, Texas!

[Read on...](#)



### ***Native Americans and Colonial Descendants: Peacemakers for Sacred Healing***

*by Rev. Linda Cornier, Brenda Miller, Caroline Betancourt*

Descendants of Colonial settlers and Native Americans came together on December 1, 2007, for a special luncheon conference and reconciliation ceremony. Entitled, "Peacemakers for Sacred Healing," it was held in Norfolk, Virginia, on the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America. Norfolk was chosen because of its proximity to Jamestown.

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### **Women Helping Women: Ethiopia, Israel and the Sewing Machine Story**

*By Susan Bradbury, President/CEO, The Sound Essence Project*

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## ***The Fill Me Up for Peace Initiative***

**by Robin Baum**

**In 1994, sixteen hundred WFWP volunteers from Japan settled in 160 countries throughout the developing world. They were dedicated to creating projects that would help eradicate poverty among the world's neediest people. Eradication of extreme poverty is the first of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000.**

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**2008 WFWP, USA Leadership Retreat:  
A New Beginning and One Step Higher**

by Laura Hornbeck, WFWP Texas Coordinator

**Y'all Come to Houston!**

District, state, and city leaders of WFWP, USA, met for their annual retreat over the weekend of January 19-21, the Martin Luther King holiday. Seeking a good location for the gathering, the travel agent was given several criteria: it had to be ice and snow-free; centrally located for affordable airfare; and the costs had to fit within a non-profit budget. Put all those into a computer and where do you find the best deals in the middle of winter? In Houston, Texas!

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, women flew and drove from all over the USA – and one all the way from London -- to the Springhill Suites by Marriott near the Houston Hobby Airport. For the next two and a half days, approximately 65 women listened to presentations, participated in simulated chapter meetings, and shared ideas centered on the theme, "A New Beginning, One Step Higher."

On Saturday morning, Jeanne Carroll created a simulated monthly meeting patterned after her successful New Jersey chapter. One outcome of the conference is a new plan for each chapter, which entails holding a public meeting once a month. Jeanne discussed ways her chapters have accomplished this goal. The afternoon centered on roundtable discussions with "Running a Successful Chapter" as the focus.



Jeanne Carroll



Simulated Monthly Meeting

## Saturday Night--Lively!

Saturday evening, participants traveled to a popular all-you-can-eat buffet. Back at the hotel, groups divided by district and entertained with creative skits and songs. The food, laughter and merriment – one might say silliness -- were enjoyed by all.



Northern California group skit



Florida, Georgia group song

## Day Two

Sunday morning, after a 6 a.m. devotional, Mrs. Yang Sook Choi, the new Korean-American Vice-President for WFWP, shared some inspirational thoughts. Sadly, she recently lost an adult daughter to cancer, and she lives with the pain of that loss every day. She stated that she believes in what WFWP is doing, and she wants to honor her daughter's memory by working with the organization.



Yang Sook. Choi (left) with translator, Chung Hwan Shin

Later in the morning, another vice-president of WFWP, Mrs. Yasue Erikawa, gave a report on the historical significance of WFWP, including her years of service in Japan. “I love America,” she stated, “and I want to help all of you achieve the great goals of WFWP.” She stated further, “We have successfully created schools in Africa and elsewhere. Now we have to reach out to the young women of America with educational programs about purity in love, healthy marriages and families. This is a time of great need in America. If we make a strong determination and work hard, I know we can succeed.”



Yasue Erikawa

A special invited guest, Mrs. Martina Coombs, president of WFWP, Europe, flew from London to share in the conference. She gave a historical overview of women's position in Western society, showing how gains have been made in education, medical care, political opportunities, and financial independence. However, violence toward women and sexual exploitation continue unabated. WFWP activities in Europe include a “Call to Action Asserting the Dignity of Woman,” as well as a signature campaign against sex-oriented advertisements in the media.



Martina Coombs

Sunday afternoon, Mrs. Debby Gullery of New York spoke about the Marriage and Family Initiative, a new program sponsored by WFWP. Debby is a trained family counselor and offers seminars to groups, such as WFWP chapters. Her work is educational in nature, not therapeutic, and she stated, “Everyone can learn how to improve relationships with simple techniques. It starts with working on ‘myself’ – the one person whose behavior we can control.”



Debby Gullery



Catherine Ichinohe from Denver, and others in line for breakfast

Sunday night's program began with a delicious salmon dinner, and then a presentation by Alexa Ward about the recent WFWPI visit to North Korea. The moving and poignant photos and commentary kindled hope for an eventual thaw between north and south on the Korean peninsula. Again, women hold the key. When women manage to embrace beyond the barriers of ideology, men can more easily follow their wives, sisters, and mothers into a peaceful society.



WFWP, USA President Alexa Ward



WFWP, USA leaders enjoying the retreat

The evening ended with a candlelight ceremony dedicated to peace on earth, beginning within the heart of each human being and spreading outward. The ceremony was a recreation of the closing of the 8<sup>th</sup> WFWP International Leadership Conference in North Korea.



Candlelight Ceremony



## Day Three

Monday's half-day program included panel discussions about membership development, job descriptions for WFWP leadership, and the Schools of Africa project.

Rev. Michael Jenkins, President of Family Federation for World Peace, USA, flew in from Washington, DC, to offer a congratulatory message. Participants went back to their homes with new inspirations as well as practical plans for expanding the work of WFWP in this great nation in the coming year. Truly, it was a “new beginning” which will take WFWP, USA at least “one step higher” in 2008!



Rev. Michael Jenkins, center, with various WFWP leaders and guests

## **Women Helping Women: Ethiopia, Israel and the Sewing Machine Story**

By Susan Bradbury, President/CEO  
*The Sound Essence Project*



Susan Bradbury

I have now participated in four Middle East Peace Initiatives sponsored by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF). There have been thirty-three of these initiatives so far which have been bringing people to the Holy Land for interfaith dialogue and education. Last December, I was one of two hundred people from Africa, Russia, Kazakhstan, Egypt, Macedonia, Japan, Europe and the United States who met together in Tiberias, by the Sea of Galilee. Later we also spent six days in Jerusalem and the West Bank. The program included visits to sacred sites, as well as to the cities of Bethlehem and Ramallah, in order to let us learn first-hand about the Palestinian situation.

During my trips to Israel and Palestine, I began yearning to help the women who were living in the middle of all the challenges. Last April I asked Mr. Hod Ben Zvi, Secretary General of UPF in Israel, and Ms. Miri Kamal of Women's Federation for World Peace, Israel, how I might work with a group of women in their country. They both suggested helping the Ethiopian Jewish women in the southern Israeli town of Be'er Sheva.

When I returned last June for another MEPI, Miri introduced me to an Israeli woman named Margalit, whose heart of compassion called her to begin working with the Ethiopian women at a community center in Be'er Sheva. Margalit and various other Israeli women have been creating designs, teaching and working on embroidery patterns, as well as providing a space for community among the Ethiopian women.



Margalit with a sewing machine

In 1982 thirty families emigrated from their country of Ethiopia to Israel because of their strong Jewish faith. However, integration into a culture with different language, customs, foods and so forth has been difficult. In the traditional Ethiopian way of life, the women work at home, but because of language and cultural barriers, many of their men are not employed. Therefore, their financial struggles have been great.



Margalit obtained the use of a community center, then she encouraged the women to get permission from their husbands to meet once a week to work together on embroidery projects. The husbands agreed and the work began. The embroidery project is only the beginning. The addition of sewing machines will make it possible to create additional products and greatly improve their economic situations.

Last June Margalit told me of her desire to obtain five industrial sewing machines. She felt the thirty women could share the machines and work to raise their families out of poverty. Through friends, family, and patients from my acupuncture practice, we have since raised money for three industrial sewing machines. This was through The Sound Essence Project, our non-profit organization in Washington State.



*Miri Kamal, Margalit, and Susan*

During the MEPI in December 2007, I rented a car in Jerusalem and drove with WFWP leader Miri Kamal to Be'er Sheva, where we met with the women. It was glorious to see the strength, beauty and hard work of these women. We were thrilled to be able to provide the resources for three industrial sewing machines.



Susan with Ethiopian/Israeli Group at Be'er Sheva Community Center

It is my desire to raise an additional \$1200 to buy two more machines. Then every six women will share a machine. Presently they sell their products on college campuses and in local stores. We need to expand their market. Any ideas from the readers of this newsletter would be welcome.

This collaboration between Women's Federation for World Peace and The Sound Essence Project is the beginning of many future achievements. The Sound Essence Project is a 501(c)3 with tax exempt status. Our mission is "Sustaining Cultures, Changing Lives." We work to create an international network of resources and partnerships in order to promote peace, attain gender equality, and eradicate extreme poverty and hunger worldwide. All our activities must be "sustainable," meaning they must be able to inspire local people and educate them to carry on the activities themselves.

In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now.

Dr. Wangari Maathai

To contact us with questions, ideas and donations:

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## Schools of Africa Project

### *Fill Me Up For Peace Initiative*

By Robin Baum



*Grandma told Little Tree that he did the right thing; ... when you find something good, the first thing you should do is share it with others. That way the good will spread; and no telling how far it will go...*

*From The Education of Little Tree,  
by Asa Earl Carter*

## Background

In 1994, sixteen hundred WFP volunteers from Japan settled in 160 countries throughout the developing world. They were dedicated to creating projects that would help eradicate poverty among the world's neediest people. Eradication of extreme poverty is the first of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000. The WFP volunteers determined to actually live with the people they wanted to serve in order to learn first-hand what was needed. In Africa, they determined to build schools because the governments were not able to provide education funds in rural areas. Even the cities could not provide for the educational needs of all children.

The literacy rate in most African countries is among the lowest in the world. For example, the country of Guinea-Bissau has only a 42.4% general literacy rate, and that of women is only 27.4%. In all the African countries where WFP has schools, the literacy rates of females lag behind that of males, sometimes as much as 50%. When women are educated, the quality of life tends to improve for the society as a whole. Therefore, investing in the education of African children – both female and male -- is a vital factor in the future development and success of the continent itself.



## Schools of Africa Project

Seeking to help the work of the volunteers in Africa, WFP, USA established the Schools of Africa Project. Benefits in support of seven schools in six African countries have been held for the past seven years. These annual benefits have raised awareness among Americans about the poverty and hardship faced by women and children in Africa. These schools are located in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Mozambique, Equatorial Guinea, and Guinea Bissau. A total of \$170,000 has been raised and contributed in support of construction and repair of buildings, educational supplies, and staff support.

Funds raised through the benefits are used only to support the schools in Africa, with 10% being held back as seed money for the following year. In order to further the schools of Africa project, the *Fill Me Up for Peace* fundraising initiative was established in October of 2007. A simple and creative idea, cute, pink plastic piggy banks are placed in the homes of WFWP friends and family to raise funds and awareness of the needs of Africa.



*“Fill Me Up for Peace”*



*Distributing Piggy Banks in Los Angeles*

As of February 2008, twelve hundred piggy banks have been placed throughout America for the purpose of accomplishing the following goals on behalf of the Schools of Africa:

- Financial support for the schools;
- Development of the annual Youth Service Trip;
- Seed money to explore the possibility of holding a study tour for women leaders;
- Promotional materials and staff support.

Those who take home a piggy bank are asked to fill out a registration form. They then receive by e-mail a monthly newsletter with reports about the schools. The first report was a full-color booklet about the seven schools supported by WFWP, USA in Africa. The second one was an introduction to the UN’s Millennium Development Goals as well as the status of the MDGs in Africa. The third report was a country report focusing on Kenya. The fourth report, which will go out this week, focused on Uganda.

This initiative is moving women across the country to consider the reality of life in Africa, as evidenced by these remarks by Christine Libon from New Jersey:

Thank you for pricking my conscience. Many times I sit back and ask myself why I should get involved with so many different things, and I am very busy. It is also easy to be skeptical and think that the problems of Africa are too huge and whatever we do, we won’t really solve them. But just reading your report on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals piqued my awareness of the incredible suffering of so many women, and brought me to tears. How can I *not* care? How can I not try to do *something*? It is wonderful that people like you are seriously taking on this responsibility. Thank you again.

If you would like to support the *“Fill Me Up For Peace”* initiative, please contact Robin Baum, National Coordinator, WFWP, USA’s Schools of Africa Project at 203-333-5572 or robin3b@gmail.com.

## Native Americans and Colonial Descendants Cross the Bridge of Peace

*Reported by Rev. Linda Cornier, Brenda Miller and Caroline Betancourt*

All Photos Credit: Otmar Weinmann

Descendants of Colonial settlers and Native Americans came together on December 1, 2007, for a special luncheon conference and reconciliation ceremony. Entitled “Peacemakers for Sacred Healing,” it was held in Norfolk, Virginia, on the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America. Norfolk was chosen because of its proximity to Jamestown.

More than 160 guests from the United States, England, Israel and Japan attended the event, co-sponsored by Women’s Federation for World Peace and five other organizations.



*Angela L. Daniel “Silver Star”*

The keynote speaker was Angela L. Daniel “Silver Star,” an adopted member of the Mattaponi tribe and an anthropology doctoral student who co-wrote *The True Story of Pocahontas: The Other Side of History*. The book states that, “Only from truthful history can true history be learned. Only by true history can we learn from our mistakes. Only by learning from our mistakes can we create a better life for all mankind.”

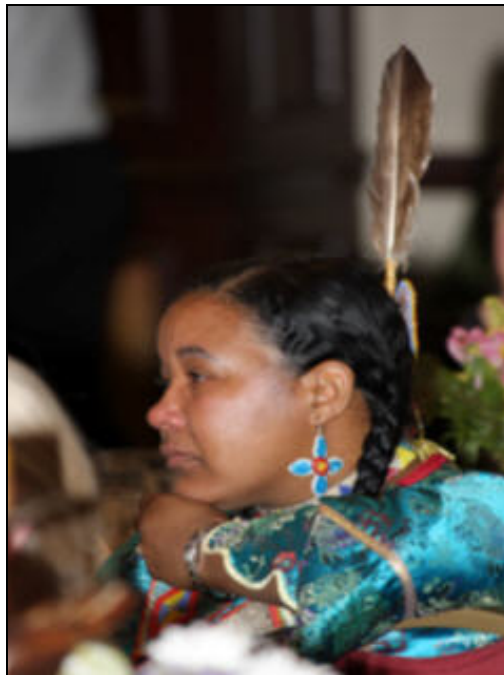
The event was infused with Native American culture. To prepare the spiritual atmosphere, the room was purified with a “smudging” ceremony conducted by Rev. George Akeen from Oklahoma, Clay Two Bears from San Diego and Shuki Ben Ami from Israel. Music and dance were performed by representatives of several tribes.





*Delwin Fiddler, Jr., Chairman, Native Nations Dance Theatre, Philadelphia, playing the flute.*

Maria Williams Cole, representing the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), congratulated the group on its efforts to build bridges of peace. Rev. Claire Daugherty, whose inspiration led to this event, spoke words of repentance for the wrongs of the past and said, “While we cannot rewrite this tragic history, we know that from this moment, the future is a blank slate.”



*Vaughnda Hilton (Blackfeet/Seminole/Creek), Native Nations Dance Theatre, Philadelphia.*

Perhaps the deepest moment of the afternoon was the Giveaway, an ancient Native American tradition. Brenda Miller, representing the Family Federation for World Peace, gathered descendants of white European colonists to give gifts to twelve guests of Native American ancestry. Descendants of such historical figures as Roger Williams, William Penn, John Hancock, Nathan Hale, and Alexander Hamilton offered the gifts. People representing the



Apache, Arapaho, Blackfoot, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Chickahominy, Lakota Sioux, Omaha, Pueblo and Seminole were there to receive the gifts.



*“Giveaway” between white Americans and Native Americans*

Gifts included a statue of repentance, covered crystal bowl, wooden bowl, drum, necklace, blanket, heart made of crystal, original oil painting, and a “Four Races of Mankind” statue. Finally, a special \$500 scholarship gift was offered by Nathan and Linda Leow through their Green Tree organization, which went to a youth from the Chickahominy tribe.

WFWP, USA, President Alexa Ward explained the meaning of the Bridge of Peace Ceremony in which Colonial descendants were paired with Native American descendants under the guidance of Mary Holden and Rev. Angelika Selle.

As the newly paired sisters stepped off the bridge, they each signed an agreement to become a “Peacemaker for Sacred Healing.” It stated in part, “We free ourselves from the pain and anguish of our past, and our committed friendship is bound on earth and in heaven in the spirit of our Ancestors.” This same Declaration was signed by Reverend Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon at a later date.



*Mrs. Alexa Ward and Rev. Linda Cornier, Bridge of Peace Ceremony*

Rev. Linda Cornier (Pueblo), Director of the United Native American Council from Colorado, led a celebration toast stating that we are all part of One Family under God. Mrs. Reiko Jenkins, representing the American Clergy Leadership Conference Women in Ministry, concluded the afternoon with a passionate statement that, “Every nation has made mistakes. But let us consider that we come together as God’s children, that it is only God who can give us reconciliation of heart so we can be liberated. We are no more alone. We are all God’s children. We are one family under God.”



Celebration Toast

At the end, the group broke into a spontaneous dance around the room. As everyone celebrated this deep and meaningful reconciliation ceremony, it seemed that, just possibly, a new future of healing and peace could begin in America.

## **The 8<sup>th</sup> WFWP, International Leaders Workshop**

By Alexa Ward, WFWP, USA President

### **Introduction**

In 2001, WFWP International initiated an annual workshop for WFWP leaders on the national and international levels. The purpose of these meetings is to reflect on the past year and plan for the next year. It is also a special opportunity for WFWP leaders to deepen their bonds and learn from one another. Over the past eight years this series of workshops has been held in South Korea, Japan, the US, Austria, Russia, Thailand, and North Korea.

The 8<sup>th</sup> WFWP International Leaders Workshop and the WFWP International Women Leaders Convention took place from October 28 – November 1, 2007, at the Cheong-a Camp in Cheong Pyeong, South Korea, and at Mount Kungang, North Korea. Seven hundred leaders took part under the theme, “Women’s Leadership in Building God’s Civilization and New World.” The American delegation included sixty-five women.

### **The Workshop**

The workshop began with an opening ceremony on the evening of November 28. Ms. Alexa Ward, president of WFWP, USA, served as the emcee. In her opening speech, Dr. Lan Young Moon, president of WFWP International, emphasized, “As we enter a global age, we should cultivate and instill leadership in women based on their unique God-given attributes, in other words, their vision and feminine values such as love, service, sacrifice, tolerance, forgiveness and empathy.”



The Honorable Hee Moon, a South Korean congresswoman, told the crowd of women from fifty countries, “I believe that womanly leadership entails having unconditional love and a humble heart that is considerate of others ... It is now time for women to stand at the center of the world and be the ones who bring change.” She encouraged the audience to “eliminate the

biased view that women are weak,” saying, “a new appraisal should be made of women’s leadership based on the power of motherhood.”

Congresswoman Hee was followed by Mr. Kook Jin Moon, chairman of the Tongil Group Foundation. “Up until now,” he said, “history has been led by men. We have been living in a world filled with wars, violence, oppression, exploitation and crime.” He went on to say, “I have watched with much expectation the many activities carried out by WFPW in practicing the founding spirit of creating a family of true love, building a healthy society and a world of peace based on the motherly love of women.”



On the morning of the second day, workshop participants had the special opportunity to visit with the founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, and her husband, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, at their home near Cheong Pyeong. The women leaders were encouraged in their work and, to mark the occasion, were given beautiful pashmina scarves.

During the day, reports were presented by WFPW leaders from the regions of Asia; Oceania; Japan; the US; the Middle East; the Northeast, including Russia; South America; South Korea, Africa; the WFWPI UN office; and Europe.



That evening, Mr. Hyung Jin Moon, president of the Cheonil Education Institute, spoke to the women. He encouraged them by saying, “Bring God’s love and warmth into this experience. You will bring great blessing to North Korea through sowing the seeds of love, empathy and connectivity.” He went on to challenge the women, “I want to ask you, in your daily lives, to become a giver of

blessings. Continue to learn how to give the blessing. In one day try to bless all of the people you come in contact with. Get into the habit of giving blessing to others, especially those close to us.”

## Traveling to the north

On the morning of the third day, with spirits high and hearts filled with anticipation, the entire workshop of seven hundred women boarded seventeen buses and traveled for several hours toward the border between South and North Korea, near the east coast of the Korean peninsula. The first stop was the South Korean Immigration Center in Donghae. At that time, the women were assigned to different buses which carried them to the North Korean Immigration area. Once in North Korea, whose official name is the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK), the buses traveled to the Kumgang resort.

The Kumgang resort is a community of hotels, restaurants and shops nestled in the foothills of Mount Kumgang. Mount Kumgang, or Kumgangsan, is a mountain range of 12,000 peaks, beloved by all Koreans. With the support of the North Korean government, the Kumgang resort was built by Hyundai in the 1990s. Hyundai has been organizing



trips to the Kumgang resort since 1998. Early groups traveled by ship, however, since 2003, it became possible to travel to the Kumgang resort from the south by bus.

Workshop participants stayed in one of three hotels, which were flanked by tall, majestic mountains. There were many persimmon trees, laden with ripe orange fruit. The hotels provided western accommodations with beds, as well as eastern accommodations with futons on the floor.

## WFWP, International's foundation in North Korea

Dr. Lan Young Moon, President of WFWP, International has visited North Korea eleven times since 2001; in Pyongyang, Kaesong, and Mount Kumgang. She also met North Korean representatives in South Korea.



President Moon is now a recognized leader on the Korean Peninsula in the area of reunification. She was recently appointed to the position of joint chair of the National Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation between South and North Korea (KCRC), an organization that exists on both sides of the border, and which, in the south, comprises more than 200 NGOs. She is also a representative of the 6.15 North-South Joint Declaration Action Committee, South Korean branch, which stemmed from the North-South Korean Summit in 2000.

The One Percent Love Sharing Project, a project of WFWP, ROK (South Korea), was established in South Korea in 2002. The purpose of this project is to set aside 1000 won (about one US dollar) every month to help the needy, starting with their neighbors to the North. This is an effort to contribute to the realization of world peace by building a foundation for the unification of North and South Korea.

A total of \$500,000 has been raised through the One Percent Love Sharing Project since 2002. Approximately \$160,000 has been donated, in the form of children's clothes, televisions, construction of a primary school, tree planting project in Kaesong, flour and ongoing aid for flood victims. Beginning in 2007, WFWP, ROK has made a commitment to support the "Kim Jung Suk Day Care Center" in Pyongyang at the level of \$50,000 annually.



## **The Convention**

A convention was held in the Mount Kumgang Cultural Center on the evening of October 30, with the theme, "Women's Leadership in Building North-South Unification and World Peace Rally." The international women leaders were joined by ten North Korean women leaders, led by Kim Ok-gyeong, vice president of the Chosun Democratic

Women's League. The purpose of the event was to support the women's resolve to go beyond religious beliefs and ideologies in order to establish lasting world peace.

In her address to the rally participants, Dr. Lan Young Moon stated, "Having women from around the world gather here at Kungang Mountain is truly significant and historical and a symbol of unification." She expressed her hope that all the virtues of women, such as understanding and maternal love, could be catalysts in the unification process. She singled out maternal love as the driving force behind WFWP's efforts to spread peace throughout the world, efforts which have been recognized by the United Nations. She pointed the hundreds of women delegates toward the future, saying, "This rally is an opportunity for us to reconfirm the need for strengthening the role of women."



Ok-gyeong Kim



Hoon-sook Moon

Ms. Ok-gyeong Kim, leader of the North Korean group, welcomed the women to North Korea and said, "I expect that this visit by the WFWP delegation will become a cornerstone for strengthening cooperation and partnership between the women in North Korea and those in South Korea and in promoting self-determined unification." She roused them all with the words, "Let us, women, go forth in promoting unification."

In her keynote address, Ms. Hoon-sook Moon, chairwoman of the Universal Culture Foundation, said, "World peace must be achieved through true love based on motherly love." She encouraged the women leaders to end conflict around the world, which is possible when they "create peace through the power of women which springs forth from true love." She alluded to oppression and discrimination that women in history faced but concluded that they are now able to discard this historical suffering because "the time of women has come." While standing on North Korean soil, she declared, "The reunification of North and South Korea can be achieved through the power of women."

Representatives from America, Japan, and Europe conveyed messages of peace. In her remarks, Ms. Alexa Ward, president of WFWP, USA, said, "As women we share a common heart and common experience as daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers. We share the same joys and we share the same heartaches. This shared and common heart

allows us to connect deeply with one another, and demands that we live for the greater good.”

She went on to say, “Even though this is my first visit to Kumgang Mountain, I feel close to the women of this land. There is much that western women can learn from Korean women. The tradition of filial piety and continual care of children runs deep in Korean culture and stands as an example for women throughout the world.”

A declaration for peace was read by Ms. Caroline Betancourt, vice president, WFWP, USA and Ms. Hwa Shin Ki, Chair, Committee on Unification Culture.



The convention concluded with a candlelight ceremony. Beginning with the candles of Dr. Lan Young Moon, Ms. Ok-gyeong Kim, and Hoon-sook Moon, the flame was passed from candle to candle throughout the hall. With the lights dimmed, the women sang the unity song, arm in arm. The women were deeply moved by the heartfelt expressions of unity.

## **Climbing Mount Kumgang**

On the fourth day, the seven hundred participants had an early breakfast and began the three hour trek up Kumgang Mountain. Following a winding path that crossed over hanging bridges above rushing water as well as through autumn woods, the course led first to Guryong Falls, then on to Cheonseondae. Those women who challenged themselves and made it to the top, Cheonseondae, were rewarded with breathtaking views.





## The Closing Ceremony

After the morning climb, the participants met in the evening for the closing ceremony to conclude the official program for the 8<sup>th</sup> International Leaders Workshop. Ms. Carolyn Handschin, the Deputy Director of WFWPI's UN office, who lives in Geneva, Switzerland, was the emcee for this ceremony. Representatives from a half dozen nations shared their reflections. Women from Malaysia, as well as from the WFWP chapter of international women in Korea, performed musical selections.

## The final day



On the morning of the final day, some of the women climbed Manmulsang peak and together shouted out for the reunification of North and South Korea. Others visited Lake Samilpo as well as a beautiful stretch of beach along the ocean.

During the trip back across the border, each woman began to process the experiences of the workshop, the visit to North Korea, Kungang Mountain, the convention, as well as those brief moments of coming face to face with the reality of life in the north. The Women's Federation for World Peace is committed to building lasting peace in the world, carefully and thoughtfully, through education, service, and peace and reconciliation activities, as exemplified by this extraordinary trip.

