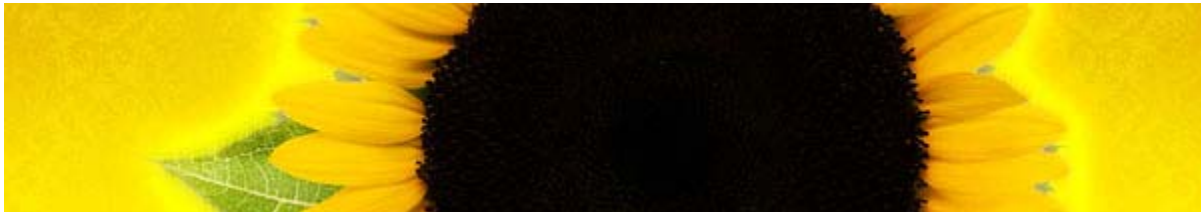




April/May 2009

WFWP, USA ENewsletter



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Inspiring Message



Times of upheaval require not just more leadership but more leaders. People at all organizational levels, whether anointed or self-appointed, must be empowered to share leadership responsibilities.

Rosalynn Carter
(1927-)
American First Lady,
Human Rights
Advocate



Letter from the Editor: It Could Be Worse!



The week before Easter, just as Tamami and I were launching into final preparations for this edition of the WFWP, USA ENews, my life took an unexpected turn and everything changed.

It was a beautiful spring day and all I was trying to do was scare a pesky squirrel from the birdfeeder outside our kitchen. I went out to the yard, picked up a rock and hurled it with all my strength toward the tree behind which the squirrel thought he was hiding. I saw that twitching tail. He was just waiting for me to go back inside so he could continue munching on bird seed. My aim was pretty good as the rock went flying in his direction.

Unfortunately, while focusing on the squirrel, I forgot to ensure my own footing. Standing on an incline and wearing slippery shoes, I proceeded to fall-- hard -- and break my ankle, badly. In the blink of an eye, normal life disappeared.

Thanks to a prompt response from the ambulance summoned by my 911 call, treatment at the emergency room of the nearest hospital, and then orthopedic surgery, I can expect a full restoration of that ankle. In five weeks or perhaps a little more, I will be able to begin putting weight on it.

There's no doubt about who won that contest between me and the squirrel. He and his extended clan have since been happily munching on our birdseed whenever they want. I am trying not to hold a grudge, even after my



squirrel-loving friend SuEllen had the gall to say, "That was God's punishment for being mean to squirrels!"



[Read On](#)

UN Commission on the Status of Women 2009

In 1946, Eleanor Roosevelt spoke to the United Nations General Assembly on the status of women. Her eloquent address was made to the "women of the world" but also encouraged governments to allow women to share in the work of peace and development. This inspired the creation of a Sub-Commission on the Status of Women under the Commission on Human Rights.



This year, the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) celebrated its 53rd anniversary. The CSW is usually held in early March for ten working days around International Women's Day (March 8th). It is one of the few events at the UN where the participants are not restricted to heads of state and the organizers actively encourage participation by NGOs (non-governmental organizations).

[Read On](#)

[Click here to read the full report, including UN Secretary-General's International Women's Day Address](#)

International Women's Day in DC



"Women as Peacemakers - Building a Culture of Peace" was the vision of the 5th Annual International Women's Day commemoration March 12th on Capitol Hill. The dinner was sponsored by the Women for Peace initiative of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and Women's Federation for World Peace, USA (WFWP, USA). Peace X Peace (pronounced Peace By Peace), a worldwide women's communication network, was co-sponsor under this year's theme, "Creating Partnerships for Peace." The banquet room at the Rayburn House Office Building was filled with a diverse assembly of women and men, many colorfully garbed in their country's traditional dress, all celebrating the accomplishments of women, and anticipating learning more and contributing to the work of global peace building.

[Read On](#)

International Women's Day in Canada

The Toronto chapter of WFWP held their third annual celebration of International Women's Day (IWD) on March 7, 2009, at a local restaurant and banquet hall, Canadiana. Approximately forty-five people were in attendance, including former member of Parliament, the Hon. Jean



Augustine. Lily Tadin, WFWP Canada Chairwoman, explained that the theme for this year's IWD at the United Nations was, "Equal sharing of responsibilities among men and women, including caregiving, in the context of HIV/AIDs."



[Read On](#)

WFWP, Southern California at the Women's Club of Hollywood



The Southern California WFWP chapter launched its activities for 2009 with an afternoon tea on Sunday, January 25, at the Woman's Club of Hollywood. This club has raised funds for worthy causes, hosted community forums and cultural events for over a hundred years. They carry on their tradition with great pride. (www.womansclubofhollywood.org)

Claudelina Smith felt right at home when she first visited the Woman's Club of Hollywood. Laura Adams, club president, welcomed the seventy participants of the WFWP New Year's Tea by remarking on the power of a woman's determination, "When a woman wills, she will!"

[Read on](#)

Women of Peace Programs in New Jersey



Claire Haider, the director of WFWP's Women of Faith project and Jeanne Carroll, WFWP's District 3 coordinator have been busy with various events bridging across the different religious traditions. With leaders such as Claire and Jeanne, WFWP has been holding a number of wonderful programs with the WFWP New Jersey chapter.

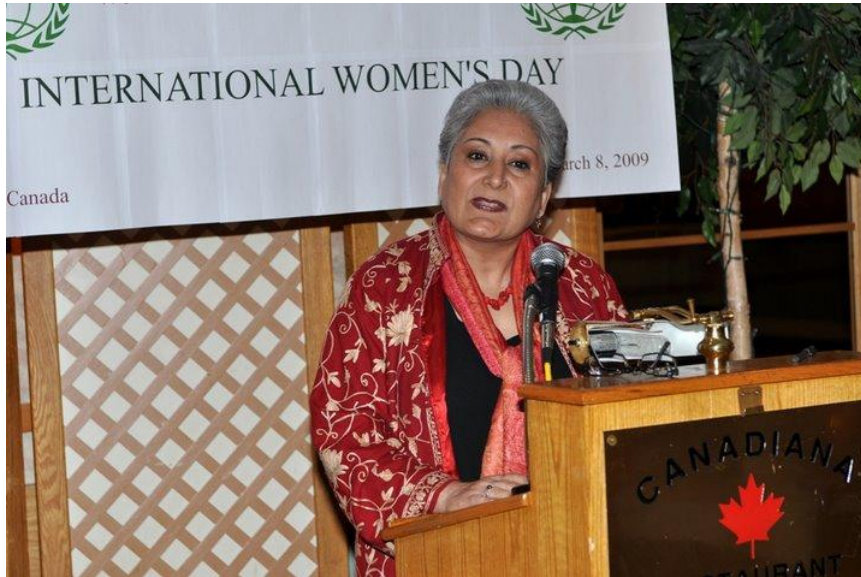
[Read On](#)

Contact Info

Description/Title
WFWP ENews
203-333-5572

WFWP Toronto Celebrates International Women's Day

The Toronto chapter of WFWP held their third annual celebration of **International Women's Day** (IWD) on March 7, 2009, at a local restaurant and banquet hall, *Canadiana*. Approximately forty-five people were in attendance, including former member of Parliament, the Hon. Jean Augustine. **Lily Tadin**, WFWP Canada Chairwoman, explained that the theme for this year's IWD at the United Nations was, "Equal sharing of responsibilities among men and women, including caregiving, in the context of HIV/AIDs."



Raheel Raza

Keynote speaker was **Raheel Raza**, award-winning author and interfaith advocate, who talked about her work on behalf of interfaith understanding, the rights of women and specifically about her latest book, *Their Jihad...Not My Jihad*. A fervent advocate for human rights, Raza is the first Muslim

woman in Canada to lead mixed gender Friday prayers. She has spoken to government departments, school boards and universities

Raza grew up in Pakistan and moved to Canada with her family in 1989. She is often called upon to speak about the differences between educated, broad-minded Muslims and extremists who have distorted the essence of Islam. In her book she describes three jihads (struggles) in which she is engaged. First, a **political jihad** against fundamentalists who try to justify violence against innocents; second, a struggle against the **subjugation of women** in Islam and its justification rooted in misinterpretations of the religion; and a **spiritual jihad**, a struggle to free oneself of prejudice and discover the values of other faith traditions.

She gave examples of women's ongoing struggles for rights throughout the Middle East,





particularly in Pakistan, her country of origin. Her talk was well received and prompted lively discussion afterwards.

Other speakers at the banquet included **Nicole Crelin**, a human rights advocate representing the Citizens' Commission on Human Rights of Canada. She gave an informative talk about the negative impact of psychiatric drugs on young people.

David Scarr, a social worker from Cornwall, Ontario, spoke about the importance of family and the need for family members to share time together and shoulder responsibilities as a team.

Exuberant entertainers included well-known Canadian singer **Donna Cain**, as well as a youth choir, "**Heaven's Call.**"

Following are excerpts from comments offered by one of the attendees, Dr. **Golam Dastgir**, Visiting Research Scholar of World Religions, University of Toronto:

..."This was a timely, most-needed, and well-organized event in which many dignitaries actively participated. ...I find the theme well-suited to the present age of globalization and industrialization. I was happy to have seen a large number of male participants who actively engaged in dialogs with their female counterparts in general and the keynote speaker in particular. ...

My wife, Khwaja Kaniz Eateme, who belongs to the most celebrated Sufi order in Bangladesh, seems to have learned a great deal about the obsessions that still exist in some parts of the Muslim world.

....I was really moved by the well-thought, well-researched and frank speech of ...Raheel Raza, a renowned interfaith advocate and diversity consultant...I personally endorsed her views and commented that a few Muslim people who lack both the knowledge of modern science and the true spirit of Islam are misguiding Muslim society, particularly Muslim women.

Having lived in a Muslim society for more than four decades and with research in Islam and world religions, I personally believe that educating Muslim women is very crucial...The crux lies not in Islam but in some misled people who misguide the society, and their first victims are uneducated or half-educated Muslim girls and children.

...Thank you so much...for choosing such a befitting theme for this crucial time when millions are affected by the deadly disease (of HIV/AIDS). Thank you for bringing together people of different cultures and communities, both male and female, to learn to equally share responsibilities....I look forward to more of such programs, but until then, congratulations on your successful event.

Golam Dastagir, PhD
Visiting Research Scholar of World Religions
University of Toronto



Commission on the Status of Women 2009

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This year, the United Nations’ Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) celebrated its 53rd anniversary. The CSW is usually held in early March for 10 working days



UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon’s
International Women’s Day Address at CSW

around International Women’s Day (March 8th). It is one of the few events at the UN where the participants are not restricted to heads of states and the organizers actively encourage the participation of NGOs.



UN Secretary-
General Ban
Ki-Moon

During this year’s Commission, the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon launched a

database on violence against women as part of his overall initiative to end violence against women. In his address during the observed commemoration of International Women’s Day, Ban shared the experience of women who were victims of

violence and stated, urgently and bluntly that this sort of violence must end.

WFWPI’s Activities during CSW 2009

Women’s Federation for World Peace International’s UN Office organized and attended several events during the Commission this year. Motoko Sugiyama, WFWPI’s vice-president and director of the WFWPI’s UN Office and her staff arranged a wonderful luncheon and an engaging parallel event that addressed the NGO and civil society’s part in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. What follows are some highlights of the two programs.



Kiyotaka Akasaka, the UN Under-Secretary-
General for Communication and Public
Information

WFWPI’s Luncheon

WFWPI and WFWP, Japan sponsored a UN Luncheon in the Delegates’ Dining Room. The topic was “The Role of NGO for Intensifying HIV/AIDS Prevention”. The keynote speaker of the luncheon was Kiyotaka Akasaka, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Communication and Public Information. He spoke on the “Priorities of the UN Agenda for 2009 and the Role of NGO in AIDS Prevention”.

Akasaka made clear the importance of NGOs in aiding the organizations in fulfilling the UN agenda for peace, security and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). He

repeatedly implored the NGO communities to help in raising awareness and acknowledged the role of NGOs in collecting on-the-ground information and new, innovative strategies to address problems and issues.

In the face of the current economic crisis, it seems clear that the role of NGOs will continue to grow. Akasaka's address made clear the need for a strengthened partnership between the UN and the NGOs.

WFWPI's Parallel Event

The topic of discussion for the CSW in 2009 was "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS". Many NGOs held parallel events on the topic sharing activities and movements in the campaign to limit the reach of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) also held a parallel event at the UN Church Center on March 2nd. The program was organized by the WFWPI UN Office, moderated by Bonnie Berry and sponsored by WFWPI and the Bridgeport International Academy.

As a women's organization, WFWPI has naturally tended towards playing the role of mother to the world's children. In addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS, WFWPI has taken up the responsibility of educating children utilizing an abstinence-based sex education curriculum.



Motoko Sugiyama presented WFWPI Japan's activities in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention education. In Japan, WFWPI has developed an abstinence education program for middle school students as part of a larger AIDS prevention program.

The curriculum consists of two parts. The first educates participants about the causes and effects of HIV/AIDS. The second part discusses the importance and benefits of abstinence from sexual activity before marriage and self-control. This second section is also focused on challenging children to achieve their dreams and goals.

In order to track the efficacy of the program, the lecturers administered questionnaires before and after their presentation. On average, the total number of participants that committed to abstinence before marriage increased from 8% to 24% after the presentation. There are also cross cultural examples of the effectiveness of abstinence based sexual education programs such as one run by WFWPI Japan in Trinidad.

Following this presentation, the Bridgeport, Connecticut Chapter of the WAIT Team, a performing arts group promoting AIDS prevention program, presented on their local activities. Matthew Breland, Wendy Wong and In Sung Harbour all shared about the program and its



positive effects on their own and their peers' lives. They spoke about their many performances that include dance, songs, and powerpoints with uplifting messages and basic information about HIV/AIDS.

Chang, Li-Shu, the Chairwoman of The Garden of Mercy Foundation in Taiwan, R.O.C. spoke on her organization's efforts to reduce mother-to-child transmission of AIDS. A number of children are infected with HIV/AIDS by his/her mother through the birthing process or through breastfeeding. The Garden of Mercy is a center for these infants to receive nutrition and nursing while waiting for HIV/AIDS test results. They have found innovative ways to provide care for these children while at the same time encouraging adoption of these children.



Alan Saunders presented on the Universal Peace Federation's character education curriculum. His program promotes successful strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention, character education and relationship skills. Through this type of education, men and women might reflect on their differences in strengths and styles in order to work together to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Following concluding remarks, the Bridgeport WAIT team performed a rendition of Eric Clapton's "If I Could Change the World".

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2009



"Women as Peacemakers - Building a Culture of Peace" was the vision of the 5th Annual International Women's Day commemoration March 12th on Capitol Hill. The dinner was sponsored by the *Women for Peace* initiative of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and Women's Federation for World Peace, USA (WFWP, USA). Peace X Peace (pronounced *Peace By Peace*), a worldwide women's communication network, was co-sponsor under this year's theme, "Creating Partnerships for Peace." The banquet room at the Rayburn House Office Building was filled with a diverse assembly of women and men, many colorfully garbed in their country's traditional dress, all celebrating the accomplishments of women, and anticipating learning more about contributing to the work of global peace building.

The United Nations officially recognized International Women's Day in 1975, stating: "When women on all continents, often divided by national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political differences, come together to celebrate their Day, they can look back to a tradition that represents at least nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development." At this event, over forty countries and twenty-three embassies were represented, making it a truly international celebration of the day set aside each year to acknowledge accomplishments of women worldwide.



Patricia Smith Melton, Founder, Peace x Peace

Alexa Fish Ward, President of WFWP, USA, **Dr. Patricia Morris**, Executive Director of Peace X Peace, and **Gail Paine**, UPF-USA, Secretary General for the DC Metro area, each offered welcoming greetings and described their organizations' goals and accomplishments. A video was shown highlighting the service projects of young volunteers during the UPF-sponsored

Global Peace Festivals in the USA, Kenya, Mongolia, and Paraguay. **Tomiko Duggan**, co-organizer and UPF Director of Public Affairs, was attending the IWD Colloquium in Liberia and could not be in attendance. Two beautiful operatic pieces offered by **Yoshimi Kadota**, "Cherry Blossom Lane" (in Japanese) and "Eternal Life" (from the words of Saint Francis of Assisi) uplifted the audience.

Patricia Smith Melton, founder of Peace X Peace and author and photographer of *60 Years, 60 Voices: Israeli and Palestinian Women*, began the main part of the program by sharing her insights gained from extensive travels. The women she met around the world all voiced common concerns about the challenges of raising children, often in war torn areas. She emphasized that "peace is not just a cessation of violence," but requires the building of a culture where unleashing human potential is the first priority.



H.E. Ezra Houda Nonoo, Ambassador of Bahrain

H.E. Ezra Houda Nonoo, Ambassador of Bahrain to the United States, the second keynote speaker, introduced the audience to the uniquely peaceful gulf nation of Bahrain, where Bahraini Christians, Jews and Muslims have lived side by side for generations respecting one another's traditions. The ambassador described the open culture of Bahrain and the emerging status of women who share many of the same freedoms as men. *(Editor's note: In September 2006, a woman from Bahrain was elected as President of the UN General Assembly. She was the third woman to serve in that one-year position and the first Muslim woman ever elected. See the WFWP, USA E-Newsletter of November-December 2006*

for an article about Sheika Haya al-Khalifa.)

Pat Morris, also known as the calypso singer "Pepper Pat," set the stage for a more interactive part of the program by offering her heartfelt rendition of the song, "From a Distance." Her voice wove a thread of warmth and hope among the guests, moving them toward realizing that we all belong to one human family.



Water of Peace participants:
 Dr. Mary Liepold, USA; Mrs. Lola Joseph, wife of Amb. of Haiti; Minister Amar Nath and Mrs. Gupta, India; Sonya Hegazy, Egypt (Emb. of Qatar); Mrs. Wakana Morioka, Japan; Adina Friedman Haj, Israel; Naila Alam, Pakistan; Kibra Abraham, Ethiopia

The Water of Peace Ceremony brought together eight women brilliantly dressed in their native attire, each representing the cultures and continents of the world. One by one, they poured a glass of water into a common vessel signifying the unity of life and the common desire of women to work together for peace. The blowing of the conch shell in the Hindu tradition by Minister Gupta of India, who stood with his wife, recognized the female deity as the source of life. Other nations represented were Pakistan, Qatar, Haiti, Ethiopia, Israel, USA, and Japan.

The Bridge of Peace Ceremony, a beautiful way of reconciling former enemies and divided parties, began creating new "partners for peace." This process started with Ingrid Guzman, representing the

Dominican Republic, with a history of conflict with Haiti, and the daughter of the Ambassador of Haiti, Ndeye Ndiaye. The two enthusiastic women crossed the bridge, symbolically leaving behind any possible resentment or fear, exchanging smiles, hugs and flower bouquets. Partnerships for peace were then created between women from the USA, Egypt, Afghanistan, Laos, Iceland, Philippines, Swaziland, Equatorial Guinea, and Namibia. All the guests were invited to create their own partnership for peace. Over twenty new pairs were spontaneously created as they sought to overcome obstacles they might have toward one another, thus creating reconciliation, unity and peace. A festive expression of networking and socializing completed this unique program.



Mrs. Hannesson, wife of the Ambassador of Iceland & Alexa Ward, President, WFWP, USA	H.E. Purificacion Ondo, Ambassador of Equatorial Guinea & Patricia Smith Melton, Founder of Peace X Peace
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(For a detailed explanation of the Bridge of Peace Ceremony, go to <http://wfwf.org/wfwpi/index.cfm?SectionGroupsID=8>)

One participant noted, “This program is like none other I have ever attended. The expression of love and concern is so substantial I can feel it in my bones.” The theme song, “Let There Be Peace on Earth,” faded softly as the evening ended on a high note honoring International Women’s Day 2009.



Sonya Hegazy, Embassy of Qatar & Dr. Patricia Morris, Peace x Peace	Caroline Betancourt, VP of WFWP, USA & Mrs. Lola Joseph, wife of the Ambassador of Haiti
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Ndeye Ndiaye, daughter of Haitian Ambassador & Ingrid Guzman, Dominican Republic



Gail Paine, Sec. Gen. UPF, USA & Hazami Barmada, Progressive Muslim Network

***Bridge of Peace* participants who created new Partnerships for Peace:**

1. Ingrid Guzman, Dominican Republic & Ndeye Ndiaye (daughter of H.E. Raymond Joseph, Haiti)
2. Alexa Ward, WFWP, USA & Mrs. Anna Hannesson, wife of H.E. Hjalmar Hannesson, Ambassador of Iceland
3. Caroline Betancourt WFWP, USA & Mrs. Lola Joseph, wife of H.E. Raymond Joseph, Ambassador of Haiti
4. Pat Morris, Peacexpeace and Sonya Hegazy, Egyptian, Embassy of Qatar
5. Lisa Delplace, Peacexpeace & Mrs. Linda Gaa, wife of H.E. Willy C. Gaa, Ambassador of the Philippines
6. Jane Wells, pastor & Mrs. Martha Hlophe, wife of H.E. Ephraim Hlophe, Ambassador of Swaziland
7. Patricia Smith Melton, Peacexpeace & H.E. Purificacion Engue Ondo, Ambassador of Equatorial Guinea
8. Marli Carvallo, American Red Cross & Mrs. Elena Nandago, wife of Namibia H.E. Patrick Nandago, Ambassador of Swaziland
9. Rebecca Risser, Middle East Media Research Institute & Mrs. Amphanah Philakone, wife of H.E. Phiane Philakone, Ambassador of Laos
10. Susan Fefferman, WFWP, USA and MC & H.E. Ezra Houda Nonoo, Ambassador of Bahrain

Reported by Susan Fefferman, WFWP, USA and Nancy Bulow UPF





- Photos by Otmar Weinmann

It Could Be Worse!

The week before Easter, just as Tamami and I were launching into final preparations for this edition of the WFWP, USA ENews, my life took an unexpected turn and everything changed.



It was a beautiful spring day and all I was trying to do was scare a pesky squirrel from the birdfeeder outside our kitchen. I went out to the yard, picked up a rock and hurled it with all my strength toward the tree behind which the squirrel thought he was hiding. I saw that twitching tail. He was just waiting for me to go back inside so he could continue munching on bird seed. My aim was pretty good as the rock went flying in his direction.

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There's no doubt about who won that contest between me and the squirrel. He and his extended clan have since been happily munching on our birdseed whenever they want. I am trying not to hold a grudge, even after my squirrel-loving friend SuEllen had the gall to say, "That was God's punishment for being mean to squirrels!"

At any rate, having been laid up for almost three weeks now, I am extremely grateful to my husband, Larry, for shouldering the responsibilities of our household. And he hasn't even complained...much.

In honor of the accident, I wanted to offer a few reflections here. First of all, I have a new personal motto: **It Could Be Worse**. No matter what the situation, it really could be worse. My aunt, for instance, had a freak accident recently and broke BOTH her ankles. She is still cheerful, however, as she relies totally on her family members for everything. At least she has a loving family, so even for her, it could be worse.

Furthermore, I was able to get top-quality care with a single phone call to 911. In our remote rural area of northeast Texas, the ambulance traveled on first-class roads to an excellent hospital. Contrast that with the situation of people in the developing world, including those villages where our WFWP Schools of Africa are located.

If you have ever seen pictures of typical rural roads in most African nations, you know what I mean. They are unpaved and turn into dirt soup with a simple rainfall. People along the roadways are accustomed to helping push travelers out of deep ruts. The photos

shared by WFWP interns from their service trip to Kenya in 2007 were eye-opening. They made me realize how much I take for granted living in this country, including roads and highways that enable us to go wherever we want.

I thank God for the blessings of living in the USA. Our family has health insurance, and I'm grateful for that, but everyone in this nation is guaranteed access to emergency services regardless of their ability to pay. I sense the sorrow of a loving God, who sees so many precious people in the world struggling to survive. A broken ankle in a remote Kenyan village will probably never heal correctly, and that person's mobility could be permanently impaired.

No doubt, our nation is enduring a painful worldwide economic recession, but I believe we should never forget how fundamentally lucky we are. No matter how challenging our lives may become, it's always good to step back and realize, "It could be worse!"

With that point of view, we gain better perspective on our personal difficulties. I am so grateful for the opportunity to be a member of WFWP, an organization devoted to healing this world with a mother's heart. I love the WFWP motto: "**All people belong to one human family,**" and I intend to strive for ways to alleviate the suffering of my sisters and brothers in every way possible -- while in a wheelchair and afterwards.

God bless you, please enjoy this edition of the WFWP, USA ENews, and have a wonderful spring. Your comments are welcomed. Send them to info@wfwp.us

Laura Hornbeck
Editor

Commission on the Status of Women 2009

In 1946, Eleanor Roosevelt spoke to the United Nations General Assembly on the status of women. Her eloquent address was made to the “women of the world” but also encouraged governments to allow women to share in the work of peace and development. This inspired the creation of a Sub-Commission on the Status of Women under the Commission on Human Rights.

This year, the United Nations’ Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) celebrated its 53rd anniversary. The CSW is usually held in early March for ten working days around International Women’s Day (March 8th). It is one of the few events at the UN where the participants are not restricted to heads of state and the organizers actively encourage participation by NGOs (non-governmental organizations).



Eleanor Roosevelt with the UN Declaration of Human Rights, which she helped to write

During this year’s Commission, UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon launched a database on violence against women as part of his overall initiative to end such violence. In his address during the observed commemoration of International Women’s Day, Ban shared the experience of women who were victims of violence and stated, urgently and bluntly, that this sort of violence must end.

What follows is a transcript of the UN Secretary-General’s Address:



UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon

One year ago, I launched a campaign calling on people and governments the world over to unite to end violence against women and girls. The campaign will run through 2015, the target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The link with the Goals is clear. We must stop the habitual and socially ingrained violence that mars lives, destroys empowerment.

Violence against women is also linked to the spread of HIV/AIDS. In some countries, as many as one in three women will be beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Women and girls are also systematically and deliberately subject to rape and sexual violence in war.

Violence against women stands in direct contradiction to the promise of the United Nations Charter to “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.” The consequences go beyond the visible and immediate. Death, injury, medical costs and lost employment are but the tip of an iceberg. The impact on women and girls, their families, their communities and their societies in terms of shattered lives and livelihoods is beyond calculation. Far too often, crimes go unpunished, and perpetrators walk free. No country, no culture, no woman, young or old, is immune.

Increasingly, men, too, are speaking out against this stain on our society. Global examples include the White Ribbon Campaign and the V-Day Campaign’s “V-Men” counterpart. And at community workshops, men are teaching other men that there is another way and that “real men don’t hit women.”

Changing mindsets and the habits of generations is not easy. It must involve all of us – individuals, organizations and governments. We must work together to state loud and clear, at the highest level, that violence against women will not be tolerated, in any form, in any context, in any circumstance.

We need economic and social policies that support women’s empowerment. We need programmes and budgets that promote non-violence. We need a positive image of women in the media. We need laws that say violence is a crime, that hold perpetrators accountable and are enforced.

The “Unite to End Violence against Women” campaign encourages men and women to join hands to oppose violence against women. Only by acting together can we create more equal and peaceful societies. Let us all, on this International Women’s Day, resolve to make a difference.



UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon’s International Women’s Day Address at CSW 2009

WFWPI’s Activities during CSW 2009

UN Luncheon

Women’s Federation for World Peace International’s UN Office organized several events during the Commission. One highlight was the WFWPI Luncheon in the Delegates’ Dining Room 6. The topic was

“The Role of NGOs for Intensifying HIV/AIDS Prevention.” It was sponsored by WFWPI and WFWP, Japan and many of the participants included WFWP members from Japan.

Ms. Motoko Sugiyama, a WFWPI vice-president and director of the WFWPI UN Office, moderated the program. Ms. Reiko Sakai and Yoko Watase gave a musical presentation in the opening and closing of the program. WFWPI President Dr. Lan Young Moon welcomed everyone and encouraged those attending to awaken others to the call for self-development. She noted the need to create a new paradigm of leadership based on the feminine qualities of harmonizing, tolerance, forgiveness, and service.



Following the welcome, Kaori Ishii, the Officer-in-Charge of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) with the UN Development Program made opening remarks. She presented a number of issues regarding development in Africa and the progress and setbacks that TICAD faces.

Yoshie Tsuboi, Vice-President of WFWP Japan, then presented a donation to Kate Weber, the Director of US FUND with UNICEF. The donation was made to support children in Gaza.

Professor Hisako Takano made a toast and lunch commenced.

After the lunch, guest speaker Kiyotaka Akasaka, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Communication and Public Information, spoke on the “Priorities of the UN Agenda for 2009 and the Role of NGO in AIDS Prevention.”

He began by listing the priorities of the United Nations as: 1) Maintain peace and security; 2) promote social and economic development; 3) Preserve and promote human rights; and 4) Climate change and disarmament.

In regards to the first priority of peace and security, he noted that the list of areas of conflict is long. There are extremely delicate situations in countries such as Sudan, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Ethiopia, Gaza and the Middle East, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, N Korea, Haiti, etc. But there are also indications of progress. He cited as an example that on March 4th, the International Court, independent of the UN, issued an arrest warrant for the President of the Sudan on charges of genocide. This is the first time in history that a sitting president has been indicted. But there still remains a need to address the needs of the citizens of Gaza and Iraq. The situation in Iran is worsening and the situation in Myanmar is precarious. Also, North Korea may launch a missile or a satellite at any time.

He noted that in the current economic environment, there are worries about achieving the Millennium





Development Goals. Still, seventy million children in Africa are not able to attend school; half a million pregnant women die every year; one out of every six people does not have clean water; 33 million are living with HIV and in 2007, 2.7 million were newly affected. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, 20-30% of rape victims get HIV. Climate change is another issue that the world faces and there are plans to hold Kyoto II at the end of this year in Copenhagen.

Akasaka stated that while much of the world is becoming safer and more prosperous, there are also these serious problem areas around the globe. He eloquently pleaded for NGOs to help the UN in its efforts to raise awareness of such problems.



WFWPI's Parallel Event

The topic of discussion for the CSW in 2009 was, “The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS.” Many NGOs held parallel events on the topic, sharing activities in the campaign to limit the reach of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The Women’s Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) also held a parallel event at the UN Church Center on March 2nd. The program was organized by the WFWPI UN Office, moderated by Bonnie Berry and sponsored by WFWPI and the Bridgeport International Academy.

Motoko Sugiyama, director of the UN Office for WFWPI, presented WFWP Japan’s activities in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention education. She opened by noting that while many major developed countries have begun to see a decline in HIV/AIDS infections, the numbers have continued to grow in Japan. Of these, 90% of infections are contracted through sexual contact. WFWP Japan identified three possible factors in the increase of HIV/AIDS infections since 1974: 1) radical sexual education with no moral underpinnings; 2) harmful media; 3) an increase in sexual crimes perpetrated by teachers.

As a women’s organization, WFWP is committed to the education of all children. As such, WFWP Japan has developed an abstinence education program for middle school students as part of a larger AIDS prevention program. By 2008, twenty-seven lecturers were certified to teach the curriculum in middle schools.



The curriculum consists of two parts. The first educates students about the causes and effects of HIV/AIDS. The second part discusses the importance and benefits of abstinence from sexual activity before marriage and self-control. This second section is also focused on challenging young people to achieve their dreams and goals.

In order to track the efficacy of the program, the lecturers administered questionnaires

before and after their presentation. On average, the total number of participants that committed to abstinence before marriage increased from 8% to 24% after the presentation. There are also cross cultural examples of the effectiveness of abstinence-based sexual education programs such as one run by WFPW Japan in Trinidad.



Following Mrs. Sugiyama’s presentation, the Bridgeport, Connecticut Chapter of the WAIT Team, a performing arts group of young people promoting AIDS prevention, explained their local activities. Matthew Breland, Wendy Wong and In Sung Harbour all shared about the program and its positive effects on their own and their peers’ lives. They spoke about the team’s many performances that include dance, songs, and powerpoints with uplifting messages and basic information about HIV/AIDS.

Chang, Li-Shu, chairwoman of The Garden of Mercy Foundation in Taiwan, R.O.C. spoke about her organization’s efforts to reduce mother-to-child transmission of AIDS. A number of newborns are infected with HIV/AIDS by their mother through the birthing process or through breastfeeding. The Garden of Mercy is a center for these infants to receive nutrition and nursing while waiting for HIV/AIDS test results. They have found innovative ways to provide for these children while at the same time encouraging adoption of them. Most of the birth mothers are incarcerated or are otherwise unable to care for their children.



Alan Saunders presented on the Universal Peace Federation’s character education curriculum. His program promotes successful strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention, character education and relationship skills. Through this type of education, men and women might reflect on their differences in strengths and styles in order to work together to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Following concluding remarks, the Bridgeport WAIT team performed a rendition of Eric Clapton’s, “If I Could Change the World”.

Women of Faith Programs in New Jersey



On Saturday, March 28, New Jersey WFWP representatives set up an information table at the **12th Annual Empowerment Summit and Market Place Award Luncheon** honoring community service and the academic excellence of local students. Dr. Jessie Dixon, founder and current president of **Passaic County African American Women 100+**, warmly recognized WFWP's ongoing support for their scholarship fund, grassroots activities, Grandparents Day Celebration, back to school backpack and school supply program, and

the annual Christmas program.

Jessie Dixon is an advocate of women and grandparents and she has championed these causes throughout her career. She is also founder and director of a Paterson, NJ program, **Grandparents and Relatives Care Resource Center**. She created this organization to provide a network of services and support for grandparents who are primary caregivers for their grandchildren. Dr. Dixon is an example of a bold and powerful woman who also empowers those around her.

The 250 women gathered to celebrate this remarkable event are all making a difference in their community. District representatives, state senators and the Paterson mayor, "Joey" Torres, were present as were numerous council members, school board members and clergy.

WFWP presented flowers to key leaders of the Passaic County African American Women 100+ and of the other notable organizations present. Each woman was thrilled to be personally recognized, and WFWP was proud to be a part of this memorable event.



Submitted by Jeanne Carroll, WFWP New Jersey Director

On March 29th, women from different faiths came together to talk about their common values. This event was hosted by the Islamic Center of Passaic in Paterson, NJ by the Imam's wife, Mrs. Zakkiyyah Salahuddin.

Women's Federation for World Peace was invited to speak. The theme was "The Ties that Bind Us" and speakers included representatives from Christianity and Islam. Mrs. Salahuddin emphasized the need for representation of youth at events such as this. She expressed much concern about the dwindling importance of abstinence and purity among many youth in organized religions.

Mrs. Salahuddin welcomed Women's Federation for World Peace with great respect, explaining that many people did not know about the great work WFWP is doing. Across the board, a common thread brought up by the speakers was the central role of women in the family and society, and the need for us to be united despite religious differences to create a society of peace. One of the Christian speakers heard that Women's Federation would be there and took the time to do some research. She found an inspiring quote from Rev. Moon about world peace and read it to the group.

This was the fourth year of the event and the general consensus was that it was the deepest and most sincere to date. Eighty-five women attended, including many who already knew WFWP but who gained a deeper understanding and respect for our activities after this gathering.

A delicious meal was shared by all, with conversation and the chance to meet new people and renew old friendships. Special thanks to Mrs. Salahuddin for being an example of a sincere woman of peace.

Submitted by Meadow Tallakson, WFWP New Jersey



April 3rd was the date of the **First Annual Women of Faith Event** co-sponsored by Service for Peace (SFP) at **Montclair (NJ) State University** and Women's Federation for World Peace. The

event was the inspiration of the SFP students to follow up on a 2008 ***Peace Bench Project*** which brought students of many faiths together to “Put in Their Piece for Peace.” In order to take that initiative to the next step, SFP decided to sponsor a “Women of Faith” event in cooperation with WFWP.

The student panel spoke on the topic, **“The Role of Family in Religion.”** Julie Tsinring spoke on Judaism and addressed surety of personal faith before you can bequeath it to the next generation. Catholic representative Pru Welch spoke on the importance of faith, hope and prayer and understanding that your children are God’s children. Emine Elif Kasapoglu represented the Islamic view in her explanation of the roles of each member of the family and the importance of tradition. The Unificationist perspective was addressed by Amerika Coryell, who expressed the belief that faith begins at home, and all individuals must travel through various stages of faith before they mature into the parental position.

The Montclair State Inter-Religious Studies Department as well as a variety of clubs and groups were represented in the audience. The panelists seemed comfortable and relaxed as they deeply shared their heart of faith. The toast to world peace and fellowship afterwards added to a respectful and profound experience for all. This first Annual Women of Faith Event was marvelous and left those who participated hoping for more opportunities to hear from other women of faith in the future.

Reported by Jeanne Carroll

Southern California Annual New Year's Tea

Reported by Paula Fujiwara



The Southern California WFWP chapter launched its activities for 2009 with an afternoon tea on Sunday, January 25, at the **Woman's Club of Hollywood**. This club has raised funds for worthy causes, hosted community forums and cultural events for over a hundred years. They carry on their tradition with great pride. (www.womansclubofhollywood.org)

Claudelina Smith felt right at home when she first visited the Woman's Club of Hollywood. **Laura Adams**, club president, welcomed the seventy participants of the WFWP New Year's Tea by remarking on the power of a woman's determination, "When a woman wills, she will!"

The tea was an opportunity to raise funds for WFWP projects through a prize drawing for three beautiful gift baskets donated by **Nira Levy Maslin**, owner of Rooibos Tea Shop. A video presentation was shown which highlighted the history and activities of WFWP.



The memorable afternoon showcased the unique talents and abilities of women such as WFWP National Advisor **Norma Foster**, who was a superlative mistress of ceremonies. **Rev. Michelene Millsap** of Sadoc Christian Peace Family Church offered the invocation. Catering was tastefully provided by **Tres Bien Kitchen**. The featured tea for the occasion was **Rooibos Red Tea from South Africa**, a very healthy herbal tea, presented by Nira Levy Maslin.



An amazing array of performers donated their time to provide entertainment: The three Williams sisters, **Lois, Angela and Angel**, sang a tribute to Africa entitled, "I Need You to Survive." **Vivian Florian**, a world-class pianist virtuosa, elicited standing ovations with a medley of classical pieces. Three young women from the **Hollywood Ballet**, directed by Rick Heiman, performed a dance interpretation of Mozart's "Requiem." **Cantor Estherleon** and **Ivor Pyres** sang several duets from Puccini

arias.



Last but not least was the announcement of winners of the **“Best Teapot” contest**. Everyone stood in a circle holding hands as they sang, **“Let There Be Peace on Earth,”** a tradition at the close of all Southern California WFWP gatherings.

As WFWP looks forward to developing more partnerships for peace in 2009, the Southern California chapter is inspired to work with the historic Woman’s Club of Hollywood.