



Volume 5, Issue 4: Summer 2009 WFWP, USA ENewsletter



In This Issue

Special Women's Meeting with
Mrs. In Jin Moon
Uncommon Height
First Lady's Luncheon
U Thant Commemoration
UN Women for Peace



"When I look at the future,
it's so bright it burns my
eyes."

Oprah Winfrey
(1954 -)
American media
personality and
producer

WFWP, USA Mission Statement

Women working together
To establish a culture of
heart
In the family, community
and world
In order to achieve
Genuine and sustainable
peace
Under God

Letter from the Editor

We hope you have been enjoying summertime. Here in Texas, where the heat and humidity index is sometimes over 110 degrees, we have an ironic query, "Is it hot enough for you?"

This issue of WFWP, USA ENews highlights some fascinating activities by WFWP members and leadership on the national and international levels.

The articles about the activities of US First Ladies, past and present, remind us of the power of women to get things done. One of my favorite quotes is attributed to Margaret Thatcher: "When you want something said, ask a man. When you want something done, ask a woman."

When all is said and done, the most important issues are centered on the home - our loved ones, their future, and what we can do as individuals and families to make this a better world.

By the way, thanks for all your get-well wishes after I broke my ankle in April. It has healed nicely and I've learned my lesson: No more throwing rocks at squirrels on bird feeders (and slipping and falling). We now have a BB gun!

All the best, and see you again in the fall.

Laura Hornbeck
Editor
WFWP ENewsletter

Special Women's Meeting with Mrs. In Jin Moon

June 14, 2009

On Sunday, June 14th, four hundred and fifty women gathered from around the country to spend the day with Mrs. In Jin Moon at the Manhattan Center in New York. They came from fifteen states as well as the District of Columbia, as far away as California and Washington State; Illinois and Wisconsin; Georgia and North Carolina.



**WFWP, USA
ENewsletter Staff**

Laura Hornbeck
Editor

Tamami Kawamura
Layout Editor

Contributors in this issue

Jeanne Carroll
Ester Davis
Laura Hornbeck
Tamami Kawamura
Win Win Kyi
Alexa Ward

[Read More](#)

Uncommon Height 2009

June 4, 2009



On June 4, 2009, ten representatives of WFWP, USA attended the Eleventh Annual Uncommon Height Awards banquet in Washington, DC. Sponsored by the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), this program was created in honor of the birthday of the fourth national president of that organization, Dr. Dorothy Irene Height, who

recently turned 97.

[Read More](#)

First Lady's Luncheon

April 30, 2009

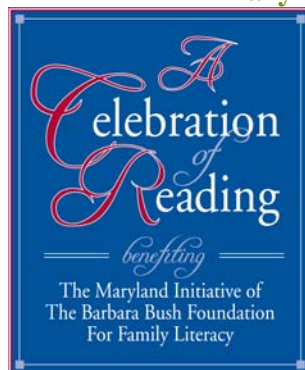
Daughter of the late New York Congressman Hamilton Fish, Alexa Fish Ward is a member of one of America's longest-serving political families. Mrs. Ward, President of WFWP, USA, has attended the annual First Lady's Luncheon in Washington, DC, for the past five years. This year's luncheon was held at the Washington Hilton hotel on April 30th.



[Read More](#)

Maryland Celebration of Reading

May 11, 2009



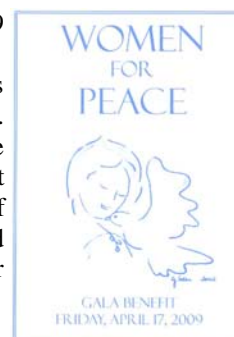
For the past five years, members of WFWP, USA have been attending the Maryland Celebration of Reading. This year, WFWP was represented by ten members and friends who enjoyed hearing from the authors and learning about the winning programs helping the families of Maryland achieve their dreams.

[Read More](#)

UN Women for Peace Benefit Gala

April 17, 2009

In March 2008, under the leadership of Anna Birgis Hannesson, wife of the Ambassador from Iceland, and Dr. Helene Yousfi from Algeria, the UNWPC started the Women for Peace (WfP) annual gala benefit. This event was created to raise money and awareness in support of women working to further peace in the world. This year and last, the proceeds of the gala paid multiple scholarships for deserving women at the University for Peace in Costa Rica.



[Read More](#)

U Thant Commemoration

June 3, 2009



Women's Federation for World Peace, USA leaders are often invited to special UN celebrations, such as the recent commemoration of the 100th birthday anniversary of U Thant. U Thant was a diplomat from Burma (now known as Myanmar) elected as third Secretary-General of the United Nations, serving

from 1961 to 1971.

[Read More](#)

Contact Info

WFWP, USA

285 Lafayette Street, Suite 307, Bridgeport, CT 06604

Website: <http://www.wfwp.us>

Phone: 203-333-5572

WFWP, USA President Alexa Ward Attends First Lady's Luncheon



Mrs. Alexa Fish Ward

Daughter of the late New York Congressman Hamilton Fish, **Alexa Fish Ward** is a member of one of America's longest-serving political families. Mrs. Ward, President of WFWP, USA, has attended the annual **First Lady's Luncheon** in Washington, DC, for the past five years. This year's luncheon was held at the Washington Hilton hotel on April 30th.

The First Lady's Luncheon is organized by the **Congressional Club**, which was formed in 1908 to encourage non-partisan socializing among spouses and relatives of members of Congress, the Supreme Court, and the President's Cabinet. In 1912, the Club first held a Breakfast in honor of the First Lady of the United States. That breakfast developed into the annual **First Lady's Luncheon**, the Congressional Club's most prestigious affair.

First Lady Michelle Obama was the honoree at this year's festive and beautifully decorated luncheon. Over 2,000 attendees sat at tables arrayed with white, blue, and green toile specially designed for the occasion by the **Kravet Company**. Every year since 2001, Kravet Inc. has custom designed and donated a special fabric for the First Lady's Luncheon, and it is used for tablecloths and other decorations.

The gathering was an occasion for the First Lady to stress the universal values of family, service and caring for others. When Mrs. Obama spoke, she first described her family's adjustments to their new life in the White House. She talked about how much help her mother -- the "First Grandmother" -- has been with childcare needs for daughters Sasha, and Malia. One of the unexpected delights of the First Lady has been Bo, their new dog. She said she gets up early every day to take him for a walk, which is a plus for her own fitness.

Mrs. Obama's message focused on **service**, which she stated is "**embedded in our core values**" as a nation, and she saluted the 62 million people who volunteer their time and services each year. Furthermore, she praised the fact that \$300 billion is generously donated



Dais setting for Mrs. Obama and honored guests

by Americans to support the work of religious organizations, foundations, and non-profits that are doing important work.

With the current economic downturn, there has been a rise in demand for the **SNAP** program, formerly known as Food Stamps. Mrs. Obama has personally worked at a food bank in the Washington, DC area, and she thanked all the people around the country who volunteer with various food bank programs.

“Whether it’s a food bank or a homeless shelter, there’s so much need out there,” she said, as she urged people to use their particular talent to help others in their community. She stressed that the “can-do” spirit of America will get us through these difficult economic times, and that we can all work together for the common good, regardless of our political affiliations.



First Lady, Michelle Obama

Each attendee at the luncheon received a gift bag made of the beautiful toile fabric by the Kravet Company. Gifts in the bag included such items as a book about planning for life’s changes; vegetable seeds for a home garden; and a beautiful George Washington replica plate.



Each guest received this custom tote bag using Kravet fabric.

Afterwards, Mrs. Ward stated, “This year, the remarks of First Lady Michelle Obama pointed all of us in the direction of service to others, which is central to the purpose of WFWP. I felt very honored to have the opportunity to attend this luncheon, together with distinguished spouses of members of Congress and the President’s Cabinet. It was an uplifting and inspiring event.”

The traditional role of First Lady has been to champion causes that transcend the conflicts of the political arena. Michelle Obama has embraced her role by encouraging Americans to follow more healthy lifestyles and to offer service to others on the national and community levels. These are goals that can only help the future of our country.

Special Women's Meeting with Mrs. In Jin Moon

By Alexa Ward



On Sunday, June 14th, four hundred and fifty women gathered from around the country to spend the day with Mrs. In Jin Moon at the Manhattan Center in New York. They came from fifteen states as well as the District of Columbia, as far away as California and Washington State; Illinois and Wisconsin; Georgia and North Carolina.

Mrs. In Jin Moon is the daughter of the founder of WFWP, International, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her husband, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, have been working together to build lasting peace in the world for more than forty years.



Mrs. In Jin Moon

Earlier this year, Mrs. In Jin Moon assumed the position of President and CEO of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, USA. She is deeply committed to uplifting the family as the cornerstone for peace in the world. Married for 25 years, she and her husband, Jin Sung Park, have four sons and one daughter.



The audience shares a laugh with Mrs. In Jin Moon

Meeting with the women in the Unification community has been the expressed desire of Mrs. In Jin Moon for a long time. WFWP, USA was asked to organize the June 14th event, and plans began to take form in early May.

At the Lovin' Life Ministries Sunday Morning Service, Mrs. In Jin Moon gave an inspiring message which included the following comments:

*...(W)e have this incredible opportunity to build what I call an **ideal family**—meaning “**I deal**” with my parents, “**I deal**” with my friends. Or maybe from a child’s point of view—“**I deal**” with my sister, ... with my brother. But all of this dealing, so to speak, is a way that we can truly learn to love each other, by **practicing true love in the family**. ...*

*Many times when we say we want world peace, we want it out there somewhere, but the true secret is that **world peace starts from each and every one of us**, and it starts in the building block of the **family** and in the great **team** that we can build.*

Following the service, a delicious lunch was served, with tasteful stations of cheese, salads, and fresh fruit, as well as ice cold drinks.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Moon addressed the special gathering of women for about forty minutes. She presented a vision for peace in the world based on **healthy and strong families**. She highlighted the woman’s role of wife and mother as central to the health and well being of the family. Beyond her words, she conveyed a depth of **heart** and **conviction** that profoundly touched the audience. Here are just a few excerpts from that talk:

*... I know for a fact that I am only effective as a leader if I continue to be an effective **mother**. So as*



Mrs. In Jin Moon pictured with Jennifer Ang (left), the former administrative director of WFWP, USA, her son Taewon (middle) and mother Marie Ang

*important as my new position is, I know that my primary position is to continue raising my children,...and make sure they are not just **spiritually** and **physically** healthy but also **emotionally** healthy....*

*One of my favorite guitarists, **Jimmy Hendrix**, said something that was quite profound. He said, “**Knowledge speaks; wisdom listens.**” My addendum to that would be, “**Knowledge speaks; wisdom listens; children observe.**” The things that children observe and take in with their five senses are the kinds of things that feed their soul, that feed the inner quality of how they feel about who they are, ... In our household, **words are very precious.***

... A social worker told me something quite shocking. He said that the most extreme and violent youth tend to come from families that are still intact. But when you look into such



Former President of WFWP, USA, Nora Spurgin greets Mrs. In Jin Moon

households, you see that the father and the mother are always screaming at each other. ...If raised in a family like this, children do not understand how to express themselves emotionally and spiritually. They are hurting so much inside but they don't know how to constructively channel the anger within, so it shows up in violence....

*We as women need to create a kind of environment where our ... future daughters and granddaughters know that, of course, men and women are biologically different, thank goodness, but they're just as precious to God as men in their **value and divinity** as human beings....*

*A journalist friend of mine ...has been bringing aid to underground schools in **Afghanistan** where thousands of young, bright, and beautiful girls are trying to study so they can have a better future. He told me of one incident: ... A group of boys in their late teens came rushing in to one of the schools, took off the girls' headdresses, and poured **acid** in their faces. ...*

*I don't know how you feel as women but I know how I felt as a mother.... If that kind of incident is still occurring in this world today, **how can we sit still** and allow this to continue?...*

*This is something that we as members of the **Women's Federation** must highlight. We must **talk** about this and **encourage** each other to **seek equal rights** and equal opportunity for our **sisters** all around the world.*

*I feel the best way to do that is to start in our **homes** with our sons and daughters. When a son makes a comment to his sister like, “You’re just a stupid girl. Why would you want to learn karate?” it should be the **mother** who takes him aside and sets him straight. She should say, “Son, your sister can be a black belt just like you can. She’s a person just as special as you are.” It’s these kinds of life-changing conversations that are going to create a generation of young men and women who can **change the world**. ...*

*So instead of imitating an extreme women’s movement that resorts to belittling or stepping on men because they’ve done us so much harm, we can be a **better** movement, a whole new movement of women, of sisters and of daughters, when we realize that it’s our divine right to be special. It’s our divine right to share our **brilliance** together with our brothers. ...*

*Our most **important** work is the work we need to do in our homes. The responsibility of the **spoken word**, especially the ramifications that our words have on our spouse, on our children, and in our environment, is something that we must really take to heart and practice in our daily lives.*

*This is a great time for women. I encourage you to get involved. Please see me as your sister who is working right along with you. Let’s change this world. **Let’s change America!***

At the end of her talk, Mrs. Moon was presented with flowers by Tamami Kawamura, Executive Director of WFWP, USA. Jamie Carroll, who went to Zambia as part of WFWP’s 2008 youth service trip, presented Mrs. Moon with a card and a gift. A group photo was taken to mark the happy occasion.

Following are some comments by women who attended the meeting:

I love her style of speaking. In a way, I feel like I am sitting at the dining room table with her and sharing a cup of coffee or tea. I gained so much insight, heart and even practical tips on how to become a better woman. **Dorothy P. Hill, Red Hook, New York. WFWP, USA Chairwoman, Upstate New York Chapter**

She spoke very simply and straightforwardly despite addressing such a diverse audience. I felt her deep respect and love toward us. **Patricia Flinginger, Chicago, Illinois. WFWP, USA Chairwoman, Illinois State Chapter**

All women want the best for their children and Mrs. Moon spoke about how we have to recognize our importance and help others as well. Throughout her speech I reflected on this and felt called to do my part to work for women’s sake. **Jamie Carroll, Dover, New Jersey. Daughter of Jeannie Carroll (WFWP District 3 Director)**

I am very, very glad I had the opportunity to listen in person to In Jin Moon during the Lovin' Life Ministry Service as well her special address to us women. And what I experienced wasn't just her words, but in person she is this amazing, real woman God wants her to be. **Friederika Buczyk, Seattle, Washington area. WFWP, USA Chairwoman, Washington State Chapter**

I felt cherished and loved as a woman, sitting in solidarity with my sisters. These are the two things I took away from the speech: that we should love our husbands and raise our children in a loving and harmonious family situation. **New**

Mother of One Daughter, New Jersey



Mitsuko Anceney Kuramoto (left) with Mrs. In Jin Moon (middle) and Kimiyo Anceney, WFWP, USA's Vice-President and Membership Director

As a young woman attending Mrs. In Jin

Moon's service, I often times feel I leave filled to the brim with her wisdom and precious life gems. She shares stories of growing up as Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon's daughter and raising up children of her own. I and the sisters of my generation are searching for practical and real-life experiences of overcoming the most frustrating aspects of relationships between partners of love - husband and wife as well as parent and child. **Esther Teo, Recent College Graduate, Connecticut**

WFWP, USA Supports Maryland Celebration of Reading

Now more than ever, literacy is at the heart of America's future, and the family is at the heart of literacy. Barbara Bush



(from left to right) Rosie Santiago, Pastor Harriett Jackson, Doro Bush Koch, Dr. Lucia Vega and Dr. Anthony Martinez

For the past five years, members of **WFWP, USA** have been attending the Maryland Celebration of Reading. This year, WFWP was represented by ten members and friends who enjoyed hearing from the authors and learning about the winning programs helping the families of Maryland achieve their dreams.

The central position of **parents** in the education of children is emphasized in the programs of WFWP. When parents value reading and learning, and they convey that to their little ones, those children have a head start in school, as well as in life.

Barbara Bush sums up the guiding philosophy of her foundation with this statement:

The **home** is the child's first school, the **parent** is the child's first **teacher**, and **reading** is the child's first subject. (www.barbarabushfoundation.com),

No matter what economic conditions they are born into, children with involved parents who promote reading and learning are fortunate, indeed. WFWP salutes all the 2009 grant recipients of the **Maryland Celebration of Reading**.



President George H.W. and Mrs. Barbara Bush

The **Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy** was founded in 1989 by then First Lady Barbara Bush, who recognized the power of her position to inspire others. Having raised her own family with a strong emphasis on reading, she established a foundation to promote literacy, her lifelong passion. Her foundation has been providing annual grants since then on a competitive basis to literacy programs helping young people and adults improve their prospects for greater happiness and family prosperity.

The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy has now surpassed **\$32 million in grants** to all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Awardees have included nonprofit organizations, correctional institutions, homeless shelters, schools, libraries, and faith-based agencies.



Doro Bush Koch

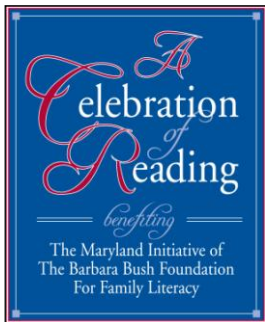
Doro Bush Koch, who lives in Bethesda, Maryland, with her family, was inspired by her mother’s work and created the **Maryland Family Literacy Initiative** in 2003 with her sister-in-law, Tricia Reilly Koch. An estimated 20% of Maryland’s residents lack the literacy skills they need to participate fully in society. This not only limits their own quality of life, it can also seriously limit their children’s development of literacy skills. The Maryland Family Literacy Initiative awards **annual grants** to programs serving low-income, low-literacy residents of the state.

This year more than **\$472,000** was granted to programs in the state of Maryland. Awards from \$35,000 to \$50,000, with winners chosen from a large group of proposals submitted by nonprofit and public agencies. Some of the 2009 grantees **Family Partnership of Frederick County**, family literacy programs and youth services; **County Public Schools**, to support the **Read, Succeed!** program; **YWCA Annapolis & Anne Arundel County**, to extend their literacy services.



ten different ranged in size from a large organizations were the providing **Montgomery Families Who**

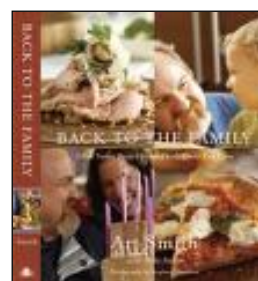
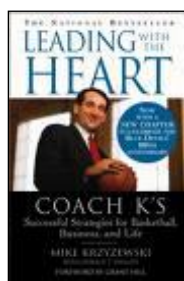
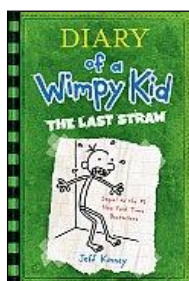
On May 11, 2009, the Sixth Annual Maryland **Celebration of Reading** was a gala event at the Music Center at Strathmore in North Bethesda. Six guest authors included historian



Doris Kearns Goodwin; Jeff Kinney, author of the hugely popular “Wimpy Kid Diaries”; Oprah’s chef **Art Smith; Brad Thor**, writer of political thrillers; **Coach “K” Mike Krzyzewski**, inspirational author; and **Kelly Corrigan**, non-fiction author of *The Middle Place*. Each author read brief excerpts from their most recent bestsellers. The wide variety of books offered a glimpse into the limitless exploration possible through reading. When people learn to read well, they can learn anything, and there are fewer limits on what they can achieve.

Other special guests at the celebration included former President George H.W. and Mrs. Barbara Bush. Representatives from all the winning literacy programs were on hand to receive recognition, as well.

Books featured at the Maryland Celebration of Reading:



*Editor's Note: On June 4, 2009, ten representatives of WFWP, USA attended the Eleventh Annual **Uncommon Height Awards** banquet in Washington, DC. Sponsored by the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), this program was created in honor of the birthday of the fourth national president of that organization, Dr. Dorothy Irene Height, who recently turned 97.*

*Dr. Height is a civil rights icon who worked with Eleanor Roosevelt and NCNW founder, Mary McLeod Bethune, among many others. During a half-hour speech, Dr. Height spoke of the importance of putting beliefs into action. Each year, the Uncommon Height Award is given by Dr. Height herself to an individual who "demonstrates a lifetime of service and achievement." This year's winner was **Oprah Winfrey**.*

Following is a reflection by Ester Davis, representing WFWP, Texas.

One Legend Celebrating Another

By Ester Davis

Ester Davis TV, Dallas, Texas



*From left to right:
Fannie Smith, Alexa Ward, Elizabeth Aihe,
Dr. Uwa Osimiri, Chezah Kayah, Eny Reed, and Grace Adams*

Traveling always ignites anticipation and excitement in me. Preferring to travel light, I rarely take luggage on a plane, but for the recent VIP trip to Washington, DC, it was absolutely necessary to have a carefully packed bag with designer gown, a pair of designer jeans, and a reliable writing instrument so I could share the experience with others.

This trip was very special for me because I was invited by two of the most powerful women's groups in the world: The Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and the National Council

of Negro Women (NCNW).

The word 'legend' is similar to the overused word 'celebrity,' and so what actually denotes a 'legend'? So many African-American women grew up hearing about the legend, the icon of Dr. Dorothy I. Height. She is truly a member of civil rights royalty. I have personally had the pleasure to interview her twice and have written four articles on her.



*From left to right:
Elizabeth Aihe, Lydia Henry, Dr. Uwa Osimiri,
and Mrs. Gauhar Khan.*

On Thursday, June 4, 2009, over two thousand people from across the avenues of the Americas attended the black tie, star-studded celebration of this civil rights pioneer, this American legend and the namesake of the *Eleventh Annual Uncommon Heights Gala*. It was indeed grand, magical, and glamorous with pomp and ceremony, including top-brass in dress uniforms from the U. S. Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard.

I'm proud to note that Texas was outstandingly well represented. Behind the velvet rope at the VIP Reception were Isabel Cottrell, co-

founder, Proline Corporation; Dr. Molly Williams, NCNW Texas Director; Carolyn Matthews, NCNW National Board Member; Sharon Beard, NCNW Section President.

Other legends in attendance at the gala were poet Maya Angelou; actress Cicely Tyson; former president of Spelman College Dr. Johnnetta Cole; Susan Taylor, editor emerita of *Essence Magazine*; Comedians Dick Gregory and Sheryl Underwood. The list of notables goes on and on.

Finally, of course, we got to see the "Pope-Rah," Oprah Winfrey, honoree of this year's banquet, along with her close friend, Gail King. The adoration and lofty praise were so intense in that room that the emcee, Shaun Robinson, hostess of "Access Hollywood," had to repeatedly remind camera-wielding acolytes to return to their tables. The entourage of non-stop stunning fashions was better than watching the Tournament of Roses Parade or the well-dressed elite who attend the Kentucky Derby.



Dr. Height was amazing. Although confined to a wheelchair, she was alert, beautifully attired and in command of every action and activity. Of course, she was also wearing a fine-looking, color-

From left to right: Fannie Smith, Alexa Ward, Ester Davis, and Eny Reed

coordinated hat. The room was silent with not a creature stirring as she reminisced, often chuckling out loud at her own comments. She spoke of her friendship with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt; terrible personal recollections of lynchings, as well as the poll tax and the civil rights marches. She gave praise to her mentor, Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, NCNW founder.

Oprah Winfrey was feted not only for her business savvy but also for her philanthropy, especially the donation of \$2.5 million to pay down the mortgage on the national office of the National Council of Negro Women. That location was once the

site of a slave market on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. The building is still referred to as the most expensive piece of real estate owned by African Americans in the country.



Dr. Dorothy Height (left) on stage with Oprah Winfrey (right)

Even going to the Ladies Room was unforgettable. CNN's Donna Brazile was washing her hands right next to me. I was surprised to realize that she is actually quite tall and statuesque.

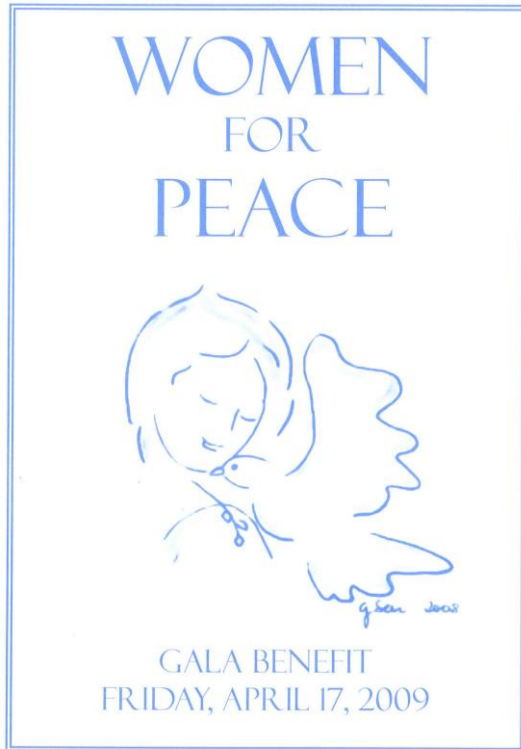


Well known politicians and entertainment figures were everywhere that night. It was truly an uncommon gathering of greatness in the spirit and tradition of Dr. Dorothy Irene Height. Thank you, Dr. Height. Thank you, Dr. Daley (NCNW Vice-Chair). Thank you Alexa Ward (WFWP, USA President). Long live the legend!

Ester Davis is a writer and a celebrated television host/producer. Read her columns online at ReligionandSpirituality.com. She can be reached at Esterdavis.com

United Nations Delegations Women's Club

Women for Peace 2009 Gala Benefit



United Nations headquarters in New York City is home base to delegations from 192 nations. For many delegates, living and working in the busy metropolitan area is exciting but stressful. Founded in 1963, the United Nations Delegates Women's Club (**UNDWC**) offers a chance for female delegates and spouses of delegates to meet one another and get together once a month at social events and charity activities.

In March 2008, under the leadership of Anna Birgis Hannesson, wife of the Ambassador from Iceland, and Dr. Helene Yousfi from Algeria, the UNDWC started the *Women for Peace (WfP)* annual gala benefit. This event was created to raise money and awareness in support of women working to further peace in the world. This year and last, the proceeds

of the gala paid multiple scholarships for deserving women at the University for Peace in Costa Rica.

Last year's **Women for Peace** gala was held at the UN General Assembly Hall. This year's site was the white marble Metropolitan Club on Fifth Avenue, one of the most lavish examples of the work of famed 19th century architect Stanford White.

The "Black Tie Optional" event included reception, dinner, silent and live auctions.



From left to right: WFWPI President Lan Young Moon, ?, Joanne Watkins, Mary Mattke and WFWP, USA President Alexa Ward



Mrs. Ban Soon-taek presented the Women for Peace Recognition Award to Jody Williams

The dinner program included recognition of two exceptional women. The **2009 UN Women for Peace Award** went to **Her Majesty Queen Noor** of Jordan for her lifetime contribution to the advancement of women's issues, her international humanitarian works and efforts in the areas of world peace and justice. Queen Noor could not attend, so UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon will present her with the award at a later date.

Following are excerpts from a taped message presented at the gala by Secretary General Ban:

The cause of gender equality should unite all of us. ... Women have been long active in lobbying and organizing for peace. ... However, women's concerns do not always reach the negotiating table, much less any final peace document.

At the same time, women are among those who suffer the most harm during conflicts, for example when rape is used as a weapon of war...

When women participate in peace negotiations and in crafting a peace agreement, their societies are the winners... For my part, I pledge to continue doing my utmost to keep the United Nations at the forefront of this effort.

Mrs. Ban Soon-taek, wife of Secretary General Ban, is a patron of **Women for Peace**, and she presented the **UN Women for Peace 2009 Recognition Award** to American Nobel Peace Prize laureate, **Jody Williams**. Ms Williams' special focus has been to eliminate landmines throughout the world, and she has also been a spokesperson and chief strategist for the International Committee of the Red Cross.



Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Jody Williams, her husband pictured here with WFWPI president Lan Young Moon

Women's Federation for World Peace, International President **Lan Young Moon** came all the way from South Korea to attend this special gala. President Moon bid on and won an auctioned painting called "**Sunset on the River**" by Kazakhstan artist Berik Kulmamirov, which had been donated by the Cultural Center of Kazakhstan.



*Women for Peace founder Anna Birgis Hannesson with President
Alexa Ward*

WFWP, USA's President, **Alexa Ward** and several WFWP members from the Connecticut chapter also attended, including **Mary Mattke, Joanne Watkins, Jayne Wood and Tamami Kawamura.**

*The 2009 United Nations Women for Peace Gala Benefit and Awards Ceremony was a truly inspiring and moving event. It was an honor to be seated among women who have dedicated their lives to the advancement of women's issues, humanitarian advances, and world peace. **Joanne Watkins, WFWP Connecticut***

Women for Peace founder Anna Birgis Hannesson, stated that, "More women need the chance to be leaders, to enjoy an excellent education, to feel free to speak out. We need to get more women involved in peacekeeping fields. Especially in places like the Congo, it's very important to get more women into the police force. ... All women's groups must unite to get this message out. "

WFWP congratulates the UN Delegates Women's Club and all their supporters on their successful 2009 Gala Benefit supporting the goal of empowerment for women and sustainable world peace.

Celebrating the Legacy of U Thant at the United Nations

Women's Federation for World Peace, USA leaders are often invited to special UN celebrations, such as the recent commemoration of the 100th birthday anniversary of U Thant. U Thant was a diplomat from Burma (now known as Myanmar) elected as third Secretary-General of the United Nations, serving from 1961 to 1971. (*In Burmese, "U" is an honorific similar to "Mister," so he had only one name: Thant.*) He led the UN at a particularly tense time in world history that included the Cuban Missile Crisis, civil war in the Congo, as well as the Vietnamese War.

U Thant was a devout Buddhist who sought to apply Buddhist principles and practices to his work at the UN. He regarded the notions of metta (good will) and karuna (compassion) as the bedrock not only of his own belief system but also of the UN and its Charter. He was known for his inclusive attitude toward people of differing beliefs and faiths, as long as they were focused on reconciliation, harmony, and world oneness.



Former United Nations
Secretary-General U Thant

The **U Thant Institute** was founded in 2003 to reflect U Thant's vision of a global society guided by a spirit of **"One World."** (www.uthantinstitute.org) June 3, 2009, was named, *A Day of Commemoration Celebrating the Legacy of U Thant*, and a luncheon was held at the United Nations' Delegates' Dining Room. Longtime WFWP supporter, Professor Win Win Kyi, a native of Burma, invited WFWP representatives to this luncheon.



Professor Win Win Kyi greets UN Secretary –General Ban Ki-moon

Win Win Kyi is an associate professor and international counselor at Bergen (NJ) Community College. She is also vice-president of the Myanmar Youth Association, NY, USA. Her distinguished family fled Myanmar in 1963 after a military coup, in the wake of oppression and political hostility. She has been an educator for over three decades, with an expertise in international communications. She has initiated many projects to assist the needy in Myanmar as well as in the USA.

In 2005, Professor Kyi was one of eight Americans attending the WFWP International Leadership Workshop in Moscow.

Comments from Professor Win Win Kyi:

As I believe in One God, One Sun, One Moon, One Earth and One Heart, I am a fervent believer that peace for all humanity is in the horizon. ...

I believe that my outreach goes beyond the comfort of my college and university whether I am at Bergen Community College or my summer teaching at Yale University. Through God's grace, I have been able to transfer my counseling and teaching skills to reach out to those who are victims of diseases and disasters. For all of it, I am eternally grateful.



Jeannie Carroll (right) with WFWP member Tokie Hessel

Following is a brief report on the UN luncheon honoring U Thant by Mrs. Jeannie Carroll, WFWP New Jersey Director.

We are grateful to Professor Kyi for the opportunity of attending the UN luncheon commemorating the 100th birthday of U Thant.

The atmosphere was buzzing with excitement as guests and dignitaries from around the world gathered.

Many current ambassadors and directors of various UN-related organizations were present. Guests were greeted with lilting violin music performed by a lovely group of young women dressed in white satin dresses. As refreshments were served, Daw Aye Aye Thant, U Thant's daughter, greeted the guests. ("Daw" is an honorific for Burmese women.)

The highlight of the luncheon was the address given by the current Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, who spoke with great respect and admiration for his predecessor. He noted that U Thant, "helped to defuse cold war tensions. He oversaw the (UN) organization's growth -- both in membership and scope. And he helped lay the foundations for what we now call sustainable development."

Secretary Ban added that, "U Thant's roots as a teacher also provided the seeds for the United Nations University and the institute that bears his name, which is built on the concept of 'One World'."

Being present at this significant event enables WFWP to offer support for the people and programs that make up the United Nations. It also helps those of us

who were there to understand our vital role as a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. We are honored to have shared in such a meaningful gathering.

Women's Federation for World Peace, USA and the United Nations



Women's Federation for World Peace is a non-governmental organization (NGO) in general consultative status with the United Nations. This status is currently granted to only about 140 organizations out of 2,870 NGOs registered with the UN. Among the criteria for achieving this status are that the group have a broad geographical reach and be dedicated to the purposes of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN.

Primary among the purposes of the ECOSOC is the achievement of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015 which address the world's main development challenges. They include eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. For a complete list, see <http://www.undp.org/mdg/basics.shtml>

First granted general consultative status in 1997, WFWP must submit quadrennial reports detailing worldwide activities. Some of the privileges afforded WFWP and other NGOs in this status include the right to attend and speak at UN ECOSOC meetings and to propose items for their consideration. For more information on the international activities of WFWP, see <http://www.wfwp.org>