



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION of the United States of America

Northern Colorado Chapter

November-December 2010

Volume 6, Number 5

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Salon duc Tape Public Meeting. Friday, 12 Nov, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Mugs Coffee Lounge at Olive and College. Elissa Tivona and Esther Sadeh will present *Walking the Green Line: Possibilities for Peace Across Borders*. See **Out and About**.

UNA Public Meeting. Saturday, Saturday, 11 Dec, at 2:30 p.m. at the downtown Fort Collins Library, 201 Peterson St. Ved Nanda will speak on *Human Rights and the International Criminal Tribunals*. See below.

International Hour For Peace. Friday, 31 Dec, 4:45 to 6:15 a.m. at the Blessed John XXIII University Center, 1220 University Avenue. See **Out and About**.

DECEMBER PROGRAM ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Our Chapter will be celebrating Human Rights Day on Saturday, 11 December, 2:30 p.m. at the downtown Fort Collins Library on 201 Peterson St. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Ved Nanda, Professor and Director of International Legal Studies at the University of Denver. He will speak about his recent experience at the International Criminal Tribunals of Congolese warlords where his students served as interns.



Ved Nanda is significantly involved in the global international law community. He is a member of the American Law Institute and the American Bar Association Section of International Law and Practice. In February 2004, Mr. Nanda was awarded the *Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award for Community Peace Building* from Soka Gakkai International and

Morehouse College. In 1990, he was presented with the *World Legal Scholar* award by the World Jurist Association. He is also the recipient of the *United Nations Association Human Rights Award*.

He is widely published in law journals and national magazines, has authored or co-authored more than 20 books in the various fields of international law and over 150 chapters and major law review articles. Many of us read his columns regularly in the *Denver Post*.

Bring your friends along for this rare opportunity to hear a renowned international legal scholar.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

OUT AND ABOUT: UNA IN THE COMMUNITY

From time to time UNA Board members are speakers at community events with an international perspective. For example:

UNA board member Elissa Tivona and Israeli-born Esther Sadeh will present *Walking the Green Line: Possibilities for Peace Across Borders* between Israel and Palestine at the Friday, 12 November *Salon duc Tape*. This lively presentation offers a glimpse of life behind the headlines and how resilient Israelis and Palestinians are choosing creativity over violence.

Salon duc Tape, a public forum sponsored by Strength through Peace, meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. in the basement of Mugs Coffee Lounge on the NW corner of College and Olive. The formal program begins with introductions at 7:20.

Margaret Smith gave several presentations on "*Enhancing Security through Peacebuilding*" during October. The first was to the League of Women Voters Great Decisions, with study and discussion materials provided by the Foreign Policy Association. Margaret supplemented this with information largely from *UN-Wire*. She also gave presentations to an *Osher Lifelong Learning Institute* class and at the 22 October *Salon duc Tape*.

Board member, Bill Timpson, spoke about peace and reconciliation at the Mennonite Fellowship program on cluster bombs. UNA NCO president Eleanor Dwight had a landmine clearance display there also.

Do you belong to a group that would enjoy a speaker from the UNA? Call Eleanor Dwight at 377-0863 or Margaret Smith, 493-3857

Sometimes there are events in the community that may be of interest to our members.

On 31 December, the *25th Annual International Hour for Peace* will be held at Blessed John XXIII University Center, 1220 University Avenue from **4:45 to 6:15 a.m.**—Yes, early morning—to join with simultaneous world-wide observances geared to Universal Mean Time. Details later.

THANKS, TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES

Our Chapter received \$52 for participating in the "Twice Shopping Day" at Ten Thousand Villages. We received 10% of their profits for purchases made on the afternoon and evening of Oct. 21. Thanks, 10,000 Villages! And thanks everyone for shopping!!

PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

Our chapter has been active! Thanks to the work of a few dedicated volunteers we have "pulled off" several fine events over the past two months:

- We had a presence with our table at the *Peace in the Park* event in Loveland. We were able to do a good deal of education with our quiz and prizes. Our colorful flags always attract favorable attention.
- Our International Humanitarian Award this year went to Binh Rybacki, founder of *Children of Peace International*. She shared with us how thousands of orphaned and homeless children's lives have been improved at the many homes and schools she has established.
- We had a table in front of 10,000 villages on UN Day asking for donations to UNICEF aid for Pakistan.
- And finally, on the afternoon of UN Day we heard the middle school essay contest winners read their essays. I think that this was one of our best programs yet! I hope many of you attended these educational and inspirational programs. This is what makes our UNA Chapter special.

I had the privilege of sitting in on a conference call with *Interdependent* writer, Barbara Corssette and UNA National president Ed Elmendorf about the changes they have observed at the UN over the years. Barbara reminded us that the UN is not a government but an affiliation of many nations and we still must remember that the sovereignty of these nations is always in play. Many things that we wish to be accomplished do not get done because of the limits national sovereignty places on progress.

Elmendorf noted that when he first began work in the UN corridors, the US was focused on containing Communism. One observation I found to be particularly intriguing: *NGOs (non-government organizations) are working as an effective alternative to nations*. Many NGOs with international makeup can work across the world in ways that individual nation states cannot or will not do.

We have some changes coming with the alliance of the UNA with the UN Foundation. Please read about this in ***Changes*** on page 3.

At our last Board of Directors meeting, we voted to change our format of programs next year. Instead of monthly formal meetings, we will have 4 major public meetings a year: to celebrate UN Day; to celebrate Human Rights Day; one to present our International Humanitarian Award, and our annual meeting.

We will also have several less formal, more socially interactive programs. These might involve viewing

films, reviewing books and holding discussions. Our program committee is working on implementing these changes and I am sure they would welcome suggestions for what you would like to see in these informal sessions.

And finally, we need everyone to introduce their friends and neighbors to our UNA Chapter so we can maintain our ongoing schedule of programs and advocacy.

*Eleanor Dwight, President
UNA/USA, Northern Colorado*

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT:

Please welcome these CSU students who have joined (or re-joined) our Chapter:

Sofia Saeed sofiasaeed_89@live.com
Muhammad Ali Kemal m.alikemal@gmail.com

Bring a friend to UNA meetings; we are always looking for new members!

Dues reminders for the 22 member households whose dues expire on December 31 will be e-mailed to you soon. You should also receive in the US Mail an official notice from the national office of the United Nations Association. If you reply to that official notice soon after you receive it, you won't have to wonder what you did with it later! We appreciate your renewals and accompanying donations!

*Margaret Smith, Mary Wolfe, Mary Jane Ward,
Membership Committee*

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT:

The elementary art contest and middle school essay contest have been completed. This year the former involved seven schools and five teachers from Loveland and Fort Collins, while the latter had entries from four schools, all from Fort Collins.

The middle school essay winners were announced at the UN DAY Program, where they read their essays to much applause. See ***Winners*** on page 3.

We are attempting to have the art contest winners' work displayed at public libraries in the two cities, as in the past. When that is arranged, we will let you know.

Our next contest will be an essay at the college level on the topic: "The International Criminal Court, What Advantages for the US to Join?" Due date is in April. The national high school essay contest for this year was cancelled due to the organizational change going on in New York.

*Dick Rush
Education Committee Chair*

WE WERE THE WINNERS



Essay winners Elysia Lucas, Bridgette Lococo, Anande Ode, Sara Graves, and Sofya Norman with UNA/USA NCO President, Eleanor Dwight. Not pictured: Joanna Shad.

Those of you who were at our UN Day celebration heard five of the middle school essays, another remarkable occasion.

Most of you are not directly involved with these contests and may not appreciate the outreach effects that they have. Teachers, parents, friends as well as students become involved in global issues and UN activities. We often hear or read, "I didn't know what a refugee was or that the UN helps them," or "Now I know what an earthquake (in Haiti) can do to schools." So to those of you who support these contests with contributions for prizes, a big thank you and an assurance that the results are heartening.

This year we received several poems and stories along with essays. They didn't win any prizes because the topic, *How Can the UN Better Help Refugees*, was difficult to get to in a poem or story. Nevertheless, the plight of refugees was dealt with much feeling. An excerpt from one is given below.

*I walk, but everything is muted,
the feeling gone from every pore of my being.
I stare at unfamiliar faces,
disgusted with my dirty self.
I call out, but no one understands,
I go to the temple but everyone is bowing
to an unfamiliar being.
Dirty and unkempt
I snuggle in my excuse for clothing.
Rags, cardboard trash surround where I sleep.
I wake up to find that it is not a dream,
And that I am a stranger in a strange land.*

Excerpt from "Stranger in a Strange Land," by Daniel Lipok, 8th grade student at Boltz Middle School

A special Newsletter including a selection of these poems will be published later this month.

CHANGES COMING TO OUR NATIONAL UNA ORGANIZATION



The UNA/USA is undergoing a major change. Representatives from each Chapter (Hugh Sanborn represented us) were in on a National meeting via conference call to vote on an alliance of the UNA/USA with the United Nations Foundation. You may remember the UN Foundation as the group founded by Ted Turner and headed by Tim Wirth. Past UNA National President, Tom Miller, who visited and spoke here last February, was instrumental in putting together this alliance. He told us of the pending changes then.

Why? The UN Foundation has no membership per se, which of course is the UNA's strong suit. Our national UNA had become short on funds, which is the UN Foundation's strength. The organizations also share many of the same goals. This alliance allows both organizations to continue their missions while benefitting from the strengths of each.

What does it mean for us? As far as I can tell, we will continue to function as we have in the past and will have the same, if not greater support, from our National office. The leaders from the UNA pointed out that this is not a merger but an alliance. We will still be working with the same staff. We will continue to use our UNA logo along with the Foundation logo. We will be receiving more specific information next month when all the legal papers have been signed.

The UN Foundation sponsors quite a few campaigns such as the bed nets campaign and the "girl up" campaign. There will be an opportunity for us to participate in these. The Foundation is also the Better World Campaign. They produce many of the materials that we read on line such as the *UN Wire*. They are very up-to-date on the use of the internet and the graphics to go along with it. I advise you to go to the UN Foundation web site, <http://www.unfoundation.org/>, and see the kinds of things they are doing.

I am comfortable with the arrangement. I think that we will see some improvements in the quality of printed and media materials available to us. I think that we will benefit by participating in the Foundation's campaigns. Sometimes this kind of hands-on work helps bring members. I trust the representatives from the UNA's local chapters and legal counselors who participated in the negotiations with the Foundation. I think that they did a careful and through job of getting the best outcomes for the UNA. They spent countless volunteer hours on this business and I thank them for their fine efforts.

I look forward to working with this new affiliation and think that we will be pleased with the many interesting doors the New UNA will open for us.

Eleanor Dwight, President UNA/USA NCO

SENATOR BENNETT SAYS YES!

I had only two seconds to shake Senator Bennett's hand this morning and to chirp out as fast as I could, "Hello, I am with the United Nations Association of Northern Colorado and we would like to ask you to vote to ratify the New START treaty (strategic arms reduction). He said, "Yes I will vote for that and did you hear what Obama said today about India having a seat in the Security Council? Interesting, let me know your thoughts about that."

Twenty second advocacy at work :-) ! Eleanor

A NECESSARY JOURNEY; A TRULY NECESSARY FILM

A review of the documentary film about our UNA/USA NCO 2010 International Humanitarian Award Winner by Elissa Tivona

As lights dimmed in the Rialto Theater in Loveland on 3 November, grainy 1960's news footage of carpet bombing, exploding patches of jungle, and terrified peasants fleeing for their lives blasted across the screen. Viet Nam through the 1960's and 70's was Binh Rybacki's home, and this was the Viet Nam I have carried in my memory for more than 40 years — a country that ripped at my own heart even in the safe haven of my American home.

Binh and her family were among the fortunate to escape from Saigon in 1975 with nothing but the clothes they wore. They were instructed to leave everything behind — suitcases with hastily gathered items, familiar livelihoods and city streets, cherished homes and family members, most of whom they would never see again.

Yet as vivid as those iconic images were, Americans moved on -- on to other images, other wars, other crises. Most of us allowed the homeland Binh left behind to recede from our minds.

A Necessary Journey, the documentary filmed after Binh's return to Viet Nam and the discovery of her life's mission on behalf of forgotten, abused and discarded children, brings the brutal legacy of that long-ago war back into immediate focus. The film provides a necessary reminder to all of us of the anguish and hardship that persist for generations after foreign soldiers go home.

On its face, the film tracks one of the legendary road trips undertaken by *Children of Peace International*, the humanitarian organization founded by Binh and husband Jack Rybacki. We follow the intrepid Rybacki and her team of volunteers and medical workers on a grueling 17-day trek across the entire length of Vietnam. Often moving daily by bus, train or on foot, the team conducts all-day clinics at every stop, whether in remote mountain villages in the pouring rain or on congested city streets. As Binh

maintains this tireless pace, she weaves together story upon story.

This complex tapestry mixes her deeply personal memoirs together with stories of babies left in dumpsters; she translates the tragic narratives of elderly grandmothers, forgotten children offered for sale, victims of incest, sex slavery and worse, and hundreds of homeless and orphaned street kids. She tells us how her faith and resolve strengthen year after year as she raises funds to build and finance schools, orphanages and medical clinics across the country. Mostly we marvel at her energy. Binh Rybacki finds a way to overcome any obstacle; she simply will not allow government officials, antiquated social norms, or natural disasters get between her and her kids.

Through the film, we learn that Binh and Jack also lost a baby of their own. Years back, while Binh lived and worked comfortably in Colorado, her infant son Garrett died of a rare disorder. The memory of that baby brings tears brimming to her deep brown eyes. But they mix with a gentle determination as she looks straight into the camera declaring her personal mission.

She is called to do whatever it takes so that no mother has to endure this kind of pain, that no baby has to be sacrificed, ever, for any reason. Then she turns away, swooping up one of the babies from a nearby crib and tickling the folds of his neck with sloppy kisses until he lights up with a toothless grin.

So it is: in the orphanages, clinics, communities and schools Binh Rybacki establishes throughout Viet Nam, she finds room for all regardless of ethnicity, gender, handicap or lack of resources. They are all her kids, until, as the preamble to the United Nations Charter declares, we save "*ucceeding generations from the scourge of war.*"

For additional information about **Children of Peace**, see <http://www.childrenofpeace.org/> and about the movie, see <http://anecessaryjourneymovie.com/>.

THE UN AT WORK:

20 NOVEMBER UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

By resolution 836(IX) of 14 December 1954, the General Assembly instituted a Universal Children's Day to be observed as a day of worldwide fraternity and understanding between children and also as a day of activity devoted to promoting the welfare of the children of the world. The Assembly suggested to governments that the Day be observed in the way which each considers appropriate. 20 November marks the day on which the Assembly adopted the *Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, in 1959, and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, in 1989.



Children from Spring Dale Senior School in the northern Indian city of Amritsar sit in the formation of a dove during an event to mark World Peace Day (21 September)

Kenyan census campaign wins UN public relations award--5 Nov 2010. A media relations campaign which sparked widespread participation in Kenya's 2009 population census has been chosen for the 2010 United Nations Grand Award for outstanding achievement in public relations.

The winning campaign, "*Nipo Natambulika*" or "*Count Me In*," was commissioned by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and developed by Apex Communications Limited (ACL). It was designed to present the Census as an important national exercise, and assuage concerns about how information would be used, especially on the matter of ethnicity.

As a result of the campaign, 98 per cent of Kenya's 12 million households participated in the survey, the highest rate since independence in 1963.

Cyprus: 25,000th landmine cleared by UN--The United Nations cleared its 25,000th landmine in Cyprus on 21 October 2010, a landmark in efforts to clear the island of the deadly weapons and eliminate barriers between its two communities.

Since late 2004, teams of de-miners working with the UN Mine Action Centre in Cyprus (UNMACC) have been working to rid the 180 kilometer-long buffer zone of landmines laid during the outbreak of inter-communal violence in 1974.

"Reaching this milestone is another important step forward in our activities serving the two communities and will hopefully serve as a prelude to a successful and satisfactory follow-on phase as we move towards our stated goal of a mine-free buffer zone, and eventually, we hope, a mine-free Cyprus," said Lisa Buitenhuis, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative.

UN-backed measles vaccination drive targets India's highest risk children--9 November. The next stage of a measles immunization drive supported by UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) began today in India, aiming to reach 134 million children and prevent an estimated 60,000 to 100,000 annual deaths from the disease.

Cholera in Haitian capitol--10 November. The Haitian authorities have recorded more than 70 cholera cases in the capital Port-au-Prince, where officials fear a massive escalation if the epidemic takes hold, a UN health body has said.

"As of Monday, the Ministry of Health had reported over 9,100 hospitalized cases and some 583 deaths in some 240 communities," Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) deputy director Jon Andrus told reporters, "including 73 cases in Port-au-Prince [and] we expect these numbers to continue to rise."

The top health official also noted that while Haiti had been spared the worst by Hurricane Tomas last weekend, the storm had pushed rivers over their banks very likely aggravating the health crisis.

"We have every reason to expect that the widespread flooding has increased the risk of cholera spreading. The effects of this could become apparent through an upsurge of cases over the coming days," he said.

The PAHO, a regional office of the UN's World Health Organization, gave a stark assessment of the situation going forward in Haiti based on the model of a massive Peruvian cholera outbreak in 1991.

"Extrapolating from Peru's experience, one might expect upwards of 270,000 cases if Haiti's epidemic continues for several years, as did Peru's," Andrus said.



A United Nations peacekeeper is handed a child during the evacuation of over 1,000 of the most vulnerable residents of the Corail-Cesselesse relocation camp in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, before the expected arrival of Hurricane Tomas

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION, NORTHERN COLORADO (NOCO) CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

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WEBSITES OF INTEREST:

UNA, Northern Colorado Chapter:

www.unanortherncolorado.org .

UNA national: www.unausa.org .

UN Foundation: <http://www.unfoundation.org/>

UNICEF: www.unicefusa.org .

United Nations information: www.un.org .

UN Information Center, DC: www.unicwash.org .

Our World 2.0—a web-magazine produced by the UN University, the academic think tank of the UN: ourworld.unu.edu/en/. Supported by video on YouTube and Vimeo.

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