

The Newsletter of Asian/Pacific Islander Unitarian Universalists and their Allies

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***A/PIC Conference 2009 Plans and Possibilities*** — by *Catie Chi Olson, A/PIC Secretary (White Bear Unitarian Church, Minneapolis, MN)*



For the first time, the A/PIC Steering Committee had the delightful dilemma of receiving four invitations to host the 2009 A/PIC conference. Through much deliberation, we decided that to support a White Ally’s proposal to host this conference in Flushing, New York. Details are still being worked out – like exactly which weekend, so keep reading Hot Rice and the general A/PIC list for more information.

Flushing was chosen also for the population surrounding the congregation. Chinese and Korean descent people are the two highest ethnic populations, with a significant South Asian population in third. As we all remember how we found Unitarian-Universalism, being a light to other people who may join both our faith and A/PIC is a significant part (see Conference, 4)

***Denton UUs Respond to Knoxville Shooting*** — by *Paul Leung (Denton UU Fellowship, Denton, TX)*



Wendy Leung (right) and Barb Rodman preparing for candlelight vigil at Denton UU Fellowship

Photo credit — Denton Record Chronicle

The recent tragic events in Tennessee Valley UU Church brought to bear what binds us together not only as UUs but beyond. For many of us in Denton, it was a reminder of how closely linked we are. While attention has been focused on the two congregations in Tennessee and rightly so, our fellowship in Denton was intimately affected - Linda Kraeger who was killed and her husband Duane were part of our fellowship when they moved to Denton from Sherman some years earlier. Joe Barnhart, who was injured along with his daughter Linda Chavez, brother and sister-in-law, and his wife Mary Ann (not physically injured) (see Denton, 4)

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## How to Open Hearts and Minds: Tips for Equal Marriage Advocates

— by Vivien Hao, A/PIC Chair (Pacific Unitarian Church, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA)

**UU**s have long advocated for and supported marriage for all—regardless of gender. But it's a tough subject to bring up to people who are undecided on one of the great civil rights issues of our time. If you've ever struggled to find the words to broach this topic, here are some helpful tips to open hearts and minds about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender equality and the freedom to marry.



These tips are adapted from a three-hour spokesperson training developed by GLAAD, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. As a communications consultant for the UU Legislative Ministry-California, I've been traveling throughout California, presenting these trainings to hundreds of UUs and other people of faith, in anticipation of a very close vote in November, when California voters have the opportunity to affirm or eliminate the freedom to marry guaranteed by our state constitution. To find out more, visit <http://www.noonprop8.com>.

### Shift the conversation:

- ◆ From "gay rights" to "*being a fair person.*"
- ◆ From "rights for different groups" to "*we're all in this together.*"
- ◆ From "sexual orientation" to "*strong families.*"
- ◆ From "marriage equality" to "*shutting out some people from marriage.*"
- ◆ From "litany of rights and benefits" to "*emotional and social rewards of marriage.*"

### Focus on these concepts:

- ◆ **Fairness**—that each of us deserves to be treated fairly and have the same chance to realize our hopes and dreams
- ◆ **Love**—two people in a committed loving, trusted relationship deserve the honor and support that comes with marriage; how would you feel if you were told you couldn't marry the person you love?
- ◆ **Exclusion**—Not everyone wants to get married

but that should be a personal choice, not one made by the government

- ◆ **Judgment**—Even if we disagree on marriage, it doesn't mean it should be illegal; it's not for us to judge others.

A final tip: Before you open the conversation, try to find out as much as possible about the other person's world view—and approach them through this understanding. For example, if you know this person is a patriot, you may want to focus on how in America, we are inclusive and fair, so why would we not afford the freedom to marry to some but not others?

It's often said that, "As California goes, so goes the nation." So many both in and outside of California will be watching the Prop 8 vote this November. But it's my belief that our UU faith calls us to do more than watch—we need to act. I encourage you to use these tips to open hearts and minds!

## UUPC Microfinance Expert Visits the Philippines

— by Bob Guerrero (UU Community of Manila)

**M**ichael Looft, a student at Harvard Divinity School, visited the Philippines last August to evaluate the Microfinance activities of the UU Communities in Metro Manila and on the island of Negros. The visit was part of the UU Partner Church Council's efforts to strengthen UU Microfinance projects all over the world. Looft, originally from the UU Church of Annapolis, Maryland, is doing his thesis on Microfinance. In both areas he delivered a basic business management course to the current clients. Looft also hopes to help create village banks, run by the borrowers themselves, in the communities. Here he is seen delivering the course at the UU Community of Bicutan, Metro Manila. Rev. Carlos Angana, the congregation minister, is serving as his translator.



## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Redress Celebrated at the NJAM Gathering — by

Hiro Nishikawa, MLUC, Devon, PA and Philadelphia JACL

Washington, DC—Amid blue skies on a comfortable afternoon (Aug. 3, 2008), under canopies in the inner courtyard of the National Japanese American Memorial (NJAM)\*, an audience of some 150 awaited Norman Mineta, former Secretary of Transportation and of Commerce, to launch the celebration marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 by then President Ronald Reagan. Despite the 20 min delay (due to Mineta being caught in one of DC's notorious traffic jams), the audience was rewarded with inspiring words from someone who had been a vital part of Redress history.

Craig D. Uchida, chairman of the NJAMF board, opened by welcoming the guest speakers and the audience on behalf of the Foundation and some three dozen co-sponsors including secular, ethnic, religious, and veterans groups. Indeed, in addition to JACLers, the audience itself was rather diverse. After the Presentation of the Colors by JAVA (Japanese American Veterans Association) representatives, there was a Laying of the Wreath by representatives for WW II veterans.

Keynoter Mineta's voice rang out about the effect of E.O. 9066 tearing at the faith placed in the United States by his parent's generation—causing loss of homes, businesses, their dreams. But he noted: "We chose not to be victims, however. And we chose not to be vigilantes, but to be vigilant." And furthermore: "We chose to be what we already were: American patriots."

Thus despite the hardships endured by Nikkei civilians in camps and service men and women in the battlefields, this history became a story for all Americans with the Commission findings after its creation in 1978 (by President Jimmy Carter). Mineta pointed out another decade of effort by Congressional leaders like "Barney Frank, Dan Glickman, and Jim Wright, Don Edwards, Alan Simpson, the late Henry Hyde, the late Sid Yates, and so many others who were *not* Japanese American" to make Redress happen. Of course, it also took leaders who were —"like Dan Inouye, the late Spark Matsunaga, and the late Bob Matsui. And then finally, on August 10, 1988, the Civil Liberties



A/PIC member Frank Wu addressing the NJAM Gathering

Act became law with the signature of President Reagan. The stigma of shame for Japanese Americans was finally lifted."

Mineta observed that the 1988 law, the NJAM, and discussions of the internment by the film series *The War* by Ken Burns last year on PBS TV have built a profound understanding with the American people, that these are *American* issues. Further, he acknowledged: "...perhaps the single most important act in my public service career that I wished both my parents had been alive to witness: signing the Civil Liberties Act on behalf of the House as Speaker Pro Tempore."

The Secretary concluded his remarks by noting that the Constitution is a compact among us citizens and is not a perfect document, but one which is in search of perfection. And is only good at protecting us as we are determined to protect it. A unique ceremony then followed. Donna Shimoda Hollingshead on behalf of JACL and Cranes for Compassion presented origami cranes (assisted by local children)--all 25,000, which were hung in bunches of strings on each of the camp plaques in the NJAM and other fixtures for the Tribute occasion. Children placed smaller strings of cranes at the foot of the bronze crane statuary centered in the Memorial.

Next, without any sense of historical irony about what triggered WWII, the new Ambassador to the United States, Ichiro Fujisaki, offered his humble words of tribute to the NJAM and the *gam-batte* spirit of Japanese Americans who had suffered incarceration and oppression. He concluded with the hope of strengthened U.S. – Japan ties in working for improved human rights around the world.

(see *Redress*, pg 5)

(Conference, from page 1)  
of our mission.

A/PIC Steering Committee member-at-large Jen Strong is coordinating a two-part program offering with the Boston Korean Adoptees, Inc. for Saturday's major program. Flushing hopes to engage in outreach to the local AP/I community and is planning to invite many of them to the church that weekend. Stay tuned in to Hot Rice and the A/PIC listserv for more details.

(Denton, from page 1)

with granddaughters Victoria and Chloe (not physically injured) were long time members of more than 40 years. When word of the shooting arrived, many in our congregation knew instinctively that we were going to be affected. Our listservs and phones were busy as members tried to sort out who were involved. As a fellowship, the decision was made to hold a service of memory and support. With Linda Kraeger's sister and family in the Dallas area, a service that included the sharing of memories and tributes was planned. Our sanctuary was overflowing that evening demonstrating the power of love and support. Members and friends were able to write or record greetings that were later forwarded to Duane, Joe & Mary Ann, Linda Chavez, Victoria and Chloe.

## ***Other UU Responses to Knoxville***

***Shooting*** — by KokHeong McNaughton (Unitarian Church of Los Alamos, Los Alamos, NM)

Within hours of the CNN newsbreak of the Knoxville shooting, a group was created on Facebook and UUs on the Internet began joining the group to obtain news updates from members of the Tennessee Valley UU Church (TVUUC) and to post their own feelings of shock, anger, as well as condolences. The Facebook UU community, now numbering more than five thousand members, responded quickly.

One of the first posts from a member of TVUUC suggested that people fold Origami cranes and send them to the RE children. Congregations across the country responded by holding vigils and folding paper cranes to express solidarity.

Here are a few reports from A/PI UUs:

- ◆ My daughter and I went over to our First UU of Columbus, OH to teach/fold (combination of re-

cycled paper/fancy Japanese Origami) paper cranes yesterday. We will be sending a box to Tennessee this morning. While we were folding, we got coverage about Origami Cranes and UU with local newspaper, Dispatch. We told the reporter/photographer that recycled paper and colorful cranes represent UU values: diversity/ environment vs. Japanese traditional (perfectly folded) thousand "pure white" crane. — by Chikako Cox

- ◆ In response to the shootings in Knoxville and the for origami cranes for the children, I folded cranes until my fingers were sore during the subsequent week. The first origami session was at the UUA's Washington Office for Advocacy, when we used part of the time normally reserved for theological reflection to fold peace cranes. My colleague, Lisa Swanson, also bought books for the RE kids, which she sent with the cranes. The second time was at my home congregation, All Souls Church, Unitarian. One of our ministers, Joyce Palmer, put out the notice to the congregation, and on the Sunday following the shooting, even though we were disorganized and the lines were long, people waited patiently for a chance to create some beauty and send a message of love to the two UU congregations that were attacked.. — by Kat Liu (All Souls Church Unitarian, Washington, DC and the UUA Washington Office for Advocacy)

The Unitarian Church of Los Alamos sent 8 strings of silver Origami cranes totaling about 400. They were tiny, tiny little cranes. In a letter accompanying the cranes, I included the following story surrounding these cranes —

*“A group of Buddhist pilgrims from Japan, on their way to a peace march in Washington DC, made a stop in Los Alamos in the spring of 2001. Our church provided sanctuary to the group by offering them meals and a place to sleep. The pilgrims wore robes and sandals and had strings of silver cranes draped across their shoulders. In the evening, they conducted a Buddhist service to which we were invited to participate. The sanctuary was decorated with these cranes, thousands of them! The lights from our candles reflected upon each one, glinting off their wings as little sparks of shimmering light to bring hope to the world.* (See Crane, 6)

## A/PIC Regional Gathering Gathers

**Momentum** — by Karin Lin ((Mission Peak UU Congregation, Fremont, CA)

On July 20, 2008, A/Pis from the Pacific Central District once again met for food and fellowship at the First Unitarian Church of Oakland. Unlike our previous meeting, this event was attended by non-A/PI family members as well. We discussed the benefits of having such regular gatherings, one of which was that our children have an opportunity to see groups full of people who look like themselves or the A/PI parent instead of the mostly-white crowds typical in UU circles.

Our next gathering will be in the fall. We hope to hold a welcoming event for the Revs. Taka-hashi-Morris, the new ministers at Mount Diablo UUC in Walnut Creek. Since one of their reasons for wanting to move here was the diversity of the Bay Area, let's introduce ourselves in style! It was also suggested that we all go to their installation. More plans are forthcoming.

We also continued the discussion from our April gathering about having a presence at District Assembly next spring, which will be in Fremont. One possibility is a workshop on the theory of microaggressions, or "minor" racial assaults. (There is a good paper on this subject by Derald Wing Sue which was uploaded to our Yahoo! group; I can email it to anyone else who is interested.)

It is good to be together indeed!



From L-R: Sharon, Alexandra, Will, and Tomoko at the A/PIC regional gathering in Oakland, CA

(Redress, from page 3)

Bob Nakamoto, current president of JAVA, recalled the staggering statistics of Japanese Americans in the armed forces of the U.S. during WWII and paid tribute to the sacrifices which became the

backbone of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

“Never again!”--the resounding mantra from the world Jewish community rang from Melanie Maron, executive director of the American Jewish Committee, DC Chapter, as she recounted the early support of AJC in the Japanese-American Redress legislation. Maron spoke to the importance of teaching the dark chapters of the Jewish and Japanese-American histories so that the atrocities and wholesale abandonment of civil liberties would not happen again—to anyone. She echoed Mineta’s words—“this is not just a Japanese-American issue, this is an American issue.”

Professor Frank Wu (UU All Soul’s, DC), speaking on behalf of the *Committee of 100*, had the last words of tribute for this day. In his resounding voice, he noted how the Nikkei community during WWII was abandoned by public officials (Earl Warren, then Attorney General of California); the media (McClatchy newspapers); civil rights groups (northern California ACLU) and others. And yet 30 plus years later, this community was able to mount a redress movement in the Congress against impossible odds. JACL provided vital support and leadership. Wu also emphasized that the history of hardship and the subsequent attaining of redress needs to be taught widely to prevent injustices from ever occurring again to anyone.

At the conclusion of the tributes, master of ceremony Dr. Uchida, presented speakers each with a ‘Redline’ copy (includes the first and last page (with signatures)) of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988—a fitting memento of this auspicious 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

[\*The NJAM to Patriotism is on a triangular block at D St & New Jersey NW Ave, about 5 min walk south from Union Station and 5 min north of the U.S. Capitol. It was dedicated on Nov. 9, 2000. There is a wall naming each camp (Hiro was in Poston, AZ) and the number of inmates incarcerated therein, and a special wall inscribing the names of 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT/100 Battalion soldiers killed in action during WWII.

In September 2001, Arab and Muslim Americans gathered specifically at the NJAM to express their anguish with the events of 9/11 and concern for civil rights being trampled by hate mongers.]

(Crane, from page 4)

Can you imagine each of these carefully folded by monks and nuns and disciples in many temples in far-away Japan? How many hands and how many hours did it take to make them?

"The next morning after breakfast, the pilgrims and some members of our church participated in a peace march around the town of Los Alamos. We carried these cranes and brought along bells and chimes and chanted along with the pilgrims. After they left, we found that they had left behind these eight strands of cranes in our sanctuary. To this day, we do not know if they had left them behind deliberately for us as a gift of blessing. But these cranes have been with us for all these years, decorating one of our bulletin boards.

"It is time to pass this on to your, our UU friends and children, who have suffered so much loss in the past weeks."

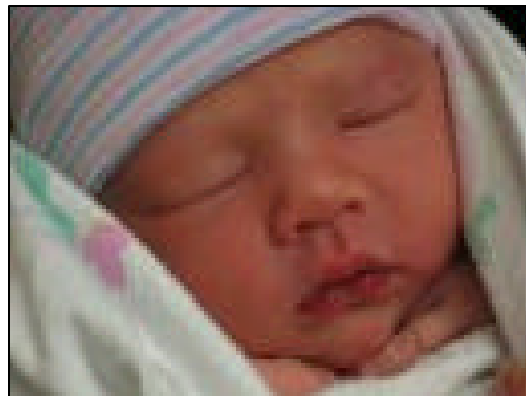


### The Origins of the Peace Crane:

Sadako Sasaki was two years old when the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Ten years later she was diagnosed with leukemia, a disease that had become known by the Japanese as the "Atom Bomb Disease." While hospitalized, Sadako was reminded of a Japanese tradition that anyone who folds a thousand paper cranes will have their wish granted. Sadly, Sadako died within the year, but her story inspired others. In 1958, a statue of Sadako holding a golden crane was unveiled in Hi-

roshima Peace Park. At the bottom of the statue are inscribed the words: "This is our cry, This is our prayer, Peace in the world". Ever since, the origami crane has been associated with a wish for peace.

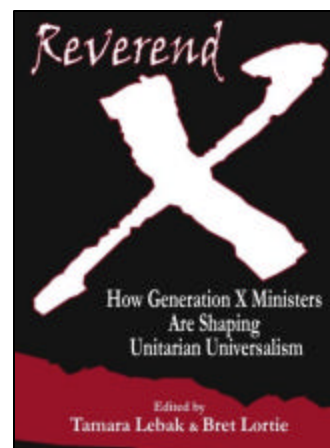
### Milestones



**L**ola Shua Tseng Jonjevic ("Shua Tseng" from the Hmong language, meaning "the voice of truth") was born on 24 July 2008 at 11:58 a.m. Central Time weighing 7 lbs, 9.5 oz and measuring 21 inches. She was welcomed to the world by her parents, PaKou Her & Nathan Jonjevic.

**J**oseph Santos-Lyons, A/PIC founding member, has a chapter published in *Reverend X: How Generation X Ministers Are Shaping Unitarian Universalism*, published by Jenkin Lloyd Jones Press at All Souls Unitarian Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma..

The chapter is entitled, "Let Us Be Awakened" and deals with multiculturalism within our UU movement.



*Milestones (cont.)*

**J**ulie Agarwal, a UU born in India and a member of All Souls Unitarian, Washington, DC, was chosen as an At-Large Obama National Delegate for the state of Virginia to the Democratic National Convention in Denver, CO, in August. ***Congratulations, Julie!***

**A**/PIC Vice President Paul Leung, UNT professor of rehabilitation, social work and addictions at the University of North Texas, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at a recent awards ceremony held during the American Psychological Association's annual convention in mid August. The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to a rehabilitation psychologist who has made distinguished contributions in his or her work in the areas of practice, science, public interest and education and training that advance rehabilitation psychology as a science or profession. ***Congratulations, Paul!***

***Become an A/PIC Member!***

A/PIC membership is open to all individuals who self-identify as partly or wholly Asian or Pacific Island in heritage or origin.

To become a member, simply state your intention by sending an email to [steering@apiuu.org](mailto:steering@apiuu.org) with the following information:

- ◆ Your full name
- ◆ The name of your congregation or UU organization with which you claim affiliation
- ◆ Your ethnic identity
- ◆ Contact information: mailing address and phone number
- ◆ A statement of intent (eg. I, \_\_\_\_\_, intend to be counted as a voting member of A/PIC.)

Membership privileges include:

- ◆ Voting
- ◆ Holding elected offices
- ◆ Accessibility to the members' only section of our website
- ◆ Scholarships to conferences and meetings
- ◆ Subscription to the members' only email list
- ◆ Receiving minutes of all Steering Committee phone conferences
- ◆ Receiving bi-annual updates on our Membership Directory
- ◆ Receiving copies of Hot Rice three times a year

***And..... There are no membership dues!***

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