

From The President

*Eddie Pauline
Columbus Chapter President*



Welcome to fall edition of the UNA-USA Columbus newsletter! As many of you know this is one of the busiest times of the year for our chapter, primarily because of the upcoming International Festival and International Forum. However, adding to our event list are some other programs that I hope you consider attending. First, on October 24, 2005 the our chapter co-sponsored the Central Ohioans for Peace Essay Contest in the Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Avenue. This served as our celebration of UN Day. Secondly, we co-sponsored another event with Jubilee USA event which we co-partnered with the Ohio Council for Fair Trade to organize. Three distinguished speakers came to Columbus to talk about the Third World Debt Relief efforts and the need for Ohioans to pressure their legislators to support it. There was a public meeting on October 25th. Finally on October 29, 2005- as part of The People Speak discussion series, an international event taking place in thousands of communities—The Marion Environment Group, International Socialists Org., International Studies Group, Amnesty International at OSU, and Student Sierra Coalition explored: environment, poverty, hunger, health and connections to conflict. This event was held at the Columbus Metropolitan Library and was co-sponsored by UNA Columbus.

As you can see we have been busy. We are also recruiting young professionals to our group in hopes we can continue to build are partnership with CCWA's young professional group. There have been a couple meetings so far that have been well attended. I hope this newsletter finds you well and I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at all of our wonderful events. As I always say, your involvement and membership is important to us!

UN Provides Earthquake Assistance

The United Nations is continuing to provide emergency assistance to victims of the recent devastating earthquake in Pakistan, but hunger and disease continue to loom and more aid is urgently needed, officials said today.

The World Health Organization (WHO), which has experts on the ground, warned that many survivors of the 8 October quake need surgery and basic medical care. With an estimated 39,000 people already dead, 1 million in acute need of emergency assistance, and tens of thousands suffering from broken limbs, head and spinal trauma, and open wounds, many risk infection, severe illness and unnecessary amputations if they don't receive help soon, the agency warned.

The agency is currently providing emergency health kits that can cover basic health needs for 210,000 people for a month, and surgical kits for 1,000 surgeries. They will also be providing tetanus vaccines, and 100,000 chlorine tablets to disinfect water, while malaria officers will begin spraying the area against mosquitoes.

In the north of Pakistan, a representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Guebre Christo, said that additional helicopters are desperately needed to ferry victims for emergency health care.

"My heart really went out to the huge number of wounded people lying by the helipad, waiting for someone to take them to an appropriate hospital," she said, noting that the agency was negotiating for access to ambulances donated by the Republic of Korea. UNHCR has scheduled back-to-back air flights and truckloads of supplies to the hardest hit areas of Pakistan. Plastic tents, blankets, plastic sheets and jerry cans for holding water are all being delivered.

Meanwhile, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) has delivered tons of high energy biscuits to the towns of Mansehra and Muzaffarabad, and a huge airlift of additional supplies are expected to arrive on Friday. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that it had air freighted 2,000 water filters, and trucked in water containers and soap, while the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) reported it had purchased medicines on the local market. The UN Foundation Board has committed \$1 million to help support the UN's immediate response in the affected countries of Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan, build critical communications and logistics capacities, and support with aid coordination. In addition, the UN Foundation established the South Asia Earthquake Response Fund to allow individual donations in support of the UN's emergency relief, reconstruction, and rehabilitation efforts.

UN MDGs: FAQs

In the coming newsletter editions, we will give an overview of each UN MDG. Presented in this edition are Goals 1 and 2.

In 1990, more than 1.2 billion people – 28 percent of the developing world's population – lived in extreme poverty. These were the poorest of the poor, struggling to make ends meet on less than \$1 a day. The target of the first Millennium Development Goal is to halve this proportion and those suffering from hunger by 2015.

By 2001, the proportion of extremely poor people fell to 21 percent in the developing world. From 1990 to 2001, rates of extreme poverty fell rapidly in much of Asia – with the number of people living on less than \$1 a day dropping by nearly a quarter of a billion people – fell slowly in Latin America, changed little in Northern Africa and Western Asia, and increased from low levels in the transition economies of South-Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. But in sub-Saharan Africa, which already had the highest poverty rates in the world, millions more fell deep into poverty.

Hunger is nearly as pervasive as extreme poverty. In 2002, an estimated 815 million people in developing countries had too little to eat to meet their daily energy needs. The proportion of people going hungry was lower in 2000-02 than in 1990-92 in all regions except Western Asia. However, the number of people suffering from hunger increased between 1997 and 2002.

The lack of food can be most perilous for young children since it retards their physical and mental development. Over 150 million children under five in the developing world are underweight, a factor contributing to over half of child deaths and lives of recurring illness and faltering growth. Child malnutrition is caused not only by food deprivation, but also by infectious diseases and lack of care.

The proportion of children who are malnourished is lower than a decade ago in all regions, with the fastest progress in Eastern Asia. Some very poor countries have been successful in reducing malnutrition even under difficult circumstances. Nevertheless, almost half the children in Southern Asia continue to be underweight. Negligible progress has been made in sub-Saharan Africa, where the number of malnourished children has actually increased, partly due to the lack of progress and the increase in overall population size.

Declining agricultural productivity and the inabil-

ity to meet the needs of growing populations is the main reason for food shortages in many countries in Africa and Southern Asia. The vast majority of the world's hungry live in rural areas and are landless or smallholder farmers or people depending on herding, fishing or forest resources. Hunger is also becoming a growing reality in burgeoning urban slums, despite the fact that the urban poor in many developing countries spend 60 per cent or more of their total expenditures on food.

Conflicts and economic failures are an increasing source of food crises. Since 1992, the proportion of food emergencies due to human-induced causes, rather than drought, has doubled. In 2004, of the 35 countries requiring emergency assistance – the majority of them in Africa – most were in conflict or post-conflict situations.

Overcoming hunger is possible, as demonstrated by more than 30 countries that reduced hunger by at least 25 per cent during the last decade. Fourteen of these countries are in sub-Saharan Africa. Strengthening agricultural production is one key to overcoming hunger, along with poverty reduction, which will demand decent and productive employment for the world's 530 million working women and men who still live on less than \$1 a day.

Basic education is a human right. It is also fundamental to reducing extreme poverty and achieving other Millennium Development Goals. Most developing regions have made progress towards universal primary education, but some 115 million children are still out of school. More than half of these children (65 million) are girls, with a disproportionate number in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia. If current trends continue, sub-Saharan Africa, Southern Asia and Oceania are not expected to achieve the goal. But the substantial improvement in primary school enrolment between 1990 and 2000 in a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa demonstrates that success is possible.

Enrolment, however, is only half the battle. Dropping out, repeating grades and a generally poor quality education mean that many of those who do attend school fail to obtain the skills needed to function as literate individuals. In the developing regions, only 85 per cent of young women and men are literate. Women continue to be less likely to learn to read and write than men. In the least developed countries, in spite of progress in enrolment, a large proportion of girls do not complete primary school and less than 60 per cent of young women are literate.

Commemorating UN60

*Ben William
VP, Finance*

For the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, Central Ohioans for Peace, Inc. (COFP) and the United Nations Association-USA, Columbus Chapter (UNACOL) sponsored a Peace Education Contest on the subject the "United Nations Role in World Peace."

Undergraduate students of invited colleges and universities submitted an essay of 500 words. Each institution selected and sent one student's essay to COFP.

On Monday, October 24, 2005 at 6:45 p.m. at Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 East Oakland Park Avenue, 6 finalists presented their essays to an audience and a panel of judges, and answered two questions about the activities of the United Nations. All contestants received cash awards. The finalists received achievement certificates from Columbus City Council and the non-finalists received recognition awards from COFP and UNCOL.

Artistic Director, Dr. Sandra Mathias directed the Columbus Children's Choir in music by Mendelssohn, Hogan, Dobrinski and others. Also, music was performed by the Central Arab Student Alliance, Ms. Zainab Alani, singer, and Mr. Eyad Khalaf, musician. A reception with international refreshments followed the event.

For further information regarding the COFP/UNA-USA Peace Education Contest, contact Robert D. Holmes at (614) 885-5112 or (614) 885-7818 or visit www.centralohioansforpeace.org.



Programs: YPIC

*Simona Vaclavikova
VP, Programs*



Young Professionals for International Cooperation (YPIC) is a program of the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA) that seeks to engage young professionals in discussions of international affairs, emphasizing the importance of multilateral cooperation and the United Nations.

While we appreciate supporters of all ages, YPIC members are typically between the ages of 21-40, and are a diverse group of individuals from the fields of business, law, government, nonprofit, the arts and philanthropy.

YPIC provides an exciting opportunity to interact with like-minded individuals and gives young professionals from all walks of life a unique forum in which to learn more about current international issues, the United Nations, and the work of UNA-USA.

Local Young Professional programs, organized by the Columbus Chapter of the United Nations Association in partnership with the Columbus Council on World Affairs, are specially designed to provide an informal forum for lively discussion and networking. Our young professionals come from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds and they bring their unique perspectives and experiences, learning together and developing common ideas and vision on how to make Central Ohio a more attractive place, ready to take action in an increasingly interconnected world.

If you are a "young professional" and would like to learn more, contact Simona Vaclavikova, VP of Programs, UNA-USA, Columbus Chapter at 614-487-1300, or email ypic@unacol.org.



Katrina: In Their Own Words

*John Ertmann
Board of Directors*

There is no denying the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina, the nation's costliest natural disaster. Far beyond the monetary impact on the Gulf region and beyond, the storm disrupted and destroyed the hopes and dreams of countless people in and around the area. Lives were lost, families were separated, hopes and dreams were forever dashed. And yet, in the midst of all of this destruction, the storm also spawned the largest outpouring of aid and deployment of volunteer relief workers in the history of America. While Katrina broke many lives, it built and rebuilt others, both those of the unfortunate victims and those that scrambled to the region to help them. I know. I was there.

At first, the senses were overwhelmed by the sight of the devastation. Endless groves of majestic pine trees, sheared off midway up their trunks by an invisible and powerful harvester. Modest homes, often little more than a rusty trailer or corrugated metal shack, split in two by the random ferocity of fallen timber. Frightened, now homeless, family pets, wandering through fields and across highways looking in vain for the comfort that only their master could provide. And people, single, in families, or together in the company of strangers, wandering nomadically north from the shattered remainders of their lives, looking desperately for food, shelter, and some direction in their lives. All of this, and more, we saw as Red Cross disaster volunteers in Southern Mississippi and Eastern Louisiana, the first to arrive on the ground in the area after Katrina slammed ashore a few days earlier.

While the images were bleak, the situation was chaotic, and the future looked marginal, there soon arose great hope from the hopelessness. Inspired largely by the indomitable spirit of those forced, unwillingly, to abandon their lives as they knew them, the rescue workers established the shelters that were essential to reestablishing security, serenity and dignity to the evacuees. Regular meals, structured recreational time, and scheduled sleep periods provided the comfort of a daily routine for those whose previously regular routines had been disrupted forever. It was truly incredible to see the blank and forlorn stares on the faces of many of our clients soon replaced with smiles and, sometimes, even laughs as they expressed gratitude to the volunteers for their efforts. And while the donation and distribution of material goods such as food, diapers, bedding, and clothing contributed significantly to the mental and physical welfare of these victims, it was the availability of an ear to listen, a shoulder on which to cry,

and a heart with which to share the tragedy of their stories that made the biggest difference in their recovery. Just sharing harrowing tales of escape from the swirling waters in Biloxi, of scrounging for food on the roads out of New Orleans, or of locating gasoline for cars in St. Tammany parish, made them feel connected, and better.

Although clichéd, it was the consensus of all of the Red Cross volunteers with whom I worked that it was we who were truly blessed by this otherwise awful event. In so many ways, we came away from our time in the Gulf better people for having been there. First, we were able to serve side-by-side with people of many different backgrounds and cultures. In my Logistics team I worked closely with a neurosurgeon from Chicago, an Americorp student from Montana, a grandmother and furniture designer from North Carolina, a truck driver from Northern Ohio, a recent emigrant from Colombia living in New Jersey, and a brilliant nuclear weapons consultant from Washington, D.C. Class and culture were irrelevant, and actually energized and created close bonds within our team. Second, we were thrust into a world unlike anything we had ever seen before, assisting people who had virtually nothing to begin with, and now had even less than that. Believe me, that is a humbling and life-changing experience. While we struggled at times to adjust to the culture shock, it was the evacuees and the local victims themselves who asked about our welfare, concerned that we were getting enough rest and food while we were working on their behalf. I lost track of the handshakes and hugs I received while I was there.

The impact of all of this on me, and for many like me, has many facets. It is impossible not to be eternally grateful for the material blessings we all enjoy after seeing the overwhelming poverty in this region of the country. It is inappropriate to use the word "need" in the same way that I did before I was deployed to the area. It is now difficult to see others with a culture and background significantly varied from my own as anything but my brothers and sisters, different in circumstances but not in the essential humanity that binds us all together. We converged on Mississippi from different parts of the country, bringing diverse histories and viewpoints, but we left far closer to each other--and to those whom we helped--than we ever could have imagined. Although a tragedy, Hurricane Katrina was also a blessing in ways that could only be understood by being there.

Katrina: In Their Own Words

Mory Fuhrmann

VP, Communications

Upon receiving assignment to the Baton Rouge-based portion of the American Red Cross's efforts, it was immediately clear to me that we would need to most certainly hit the ground running. On the flight from Chicago to Baton Rouge, seated across from me was an AP Video Producer destined for Superdome. Next to and behind me was a family destined for their homes in St. Charles Parish to salvage what they could before the Parish Sheriff's office closed the area. Upon landing, the first sign that things were not at all right was the large presence of military aircraft sitting on the runways at Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport. It also appeared a nearby hangar had been converted into a makeshift field hospital. Other noted experiences that seemed keenly out of place included seeing the Michigan State Police patrolling the area around Superdome, seeing the letter 'H' painted on I-10 where emergency aircraft had landed, and the smell. Oh, God, the smell. In the first few days after the storm, many of the radio and television stations in the greater New Orleans area were knocked off the air. WWL, the local version of WTVN, led an effort amongst all radio stations in the area to get back on the air. Pooling the remaining antenna towers and broadcast, the radio stations came together to form United Radio Broadcasters of New Orleans, a simulcast over all the radio stations, consisting of 24 hour news broadcasts to help people through this disaster. It was the resolve of URBNO that I kept in mind during my assignment.

I was assigned to a damage assessment team. These forward area teams and the reports we relayed back to HQ helped determine where the ARC and its international sister societies would focus their relief efforts. For the first seven days, our division worked in LaFourche Parish, located about 40 miles southwest of New Orleans. Damage reports here varied: in the northern part of the parish, there was a tree down here, maybe a roof shingle missing there. The further south we went, the worse the damage became. By the time we made it to Grand Isle in Jefferson Parish, the damage was catastrophic. Some houses were sitting in the middle of the street, some were completely gone. The lone vehicular bridge onto Grand Isle was structurally breached; as we drove across it, each section shifted under the weight of our trucks. Elsewhere in southern LaFourche Parish, whole trailer parks had been blown away. But what dumbfounded me was the enduring southern hospitality. On countless occasions, area residents, who had lived through this unthinkable thing, thanked US for coming to help. It seemed inconceivable to me that, despite everything these folks had lost and endured through, they still found it

within their hearts to show mercy on us, the ones who had arrived on missions or mercy to help them.

The second week, our division moved into Orleans Parish. We worked in the cities of New Orleans and New Orleans East, in the 10th and 11th Districts near Lake Ponchartrain. Seeing such a major metropolitan area virtually frozen in time is something I will never forget. Everywhere we looked, it seemed as if we were looking through dirty eyeglasses. Everything was covered with a film from the flooding. Again, many houses were sitting in the middle of streets, and there was furniture on the roofs where persons had awaited rescue. We came across many pets left behind, both alive and deceased. Debris fields were piled 10 feet high on either side of I-10, and although the power was still out, the battery backups from the residential security systems caused the alarms to chirp. It was the only thing that broke the stillness besides the occasional passing military vehicle.

Our portion of the relief effort reached beyond national borders. Our staff shelter, a church in Baton Rouge, housed elements of the Belgian military and the Belgian, French, and Norwegian Red Crosses. During our time there, logistical systems were still being established, and so improvisation was sometimes required. Our DA team on some days took on a Mass Care role, carrying and distributing military Meals Ready to Eat to our assigned DA areas where the Mass Care teams had not yet been able to reach. Many times we came across folks who had ridden out the storm and had been without human contact for nearly 10 days. Sometimes we took on the basic roles of Mental Health Services: to just listen. Sometimes all evacuees and other affected persons wanted was someone to listen to them. The pain and angst was easily readable on their facial expressions, and many times treating affected persons as humans rather than one amongst millions affected made all the difference to us and them.

My assignment ended as Hurricane Rita was moving in. Despite long days, it feels like we didn't make a dent. There was so much more we wanted to do. But everyone says every little bit helped. I hope they're right. The personnel I worked with ran the gambit on backgrounds: some were firefighters, some were teachers, some were students, and some were retired. For some volunteers, this was their 20th or 30th national assignment. For some, it was their first experience with the Red Cross. But the commonality amongst us all was a deep desire to help, and ease the suffering, if only for a moment.

2006 HS Essay Contest

Jan Baker
VP, Education

In order to encourage high school students to learn more about the United Nations, an essay contest is announced at the beginning of each school year. Last year the subject was the Millennium Development Goals, and this year it will be improving the United Nations.

This is a very special time at the UN as it marks 60 years of global service in furtherance of world peace and the betterment of humanity. Leaders have come from across the world to the United Nations to celebrate and to focus on making the United Nations more relevant in the 21st century.

The entries from the Columbus Chapter have won first place twice in recent years, and we look forward to presenting another winning essay to the annual competition. There will also be prizes for the top three entries submitted to the Columbus Chapter regardless of their placement in the national competition.

Students will write a letter to the President of the United States answering the following:

1. What is the most important aspect of UN reform and why?
2. What position should the US government take on this aspect of UN reform?

Essays must be 1,500 words or less, written as letters to the President (students are encouraged to include the President's mailing address in the letter, though this is not necessary for submissions). Essays must be 1,500 words or less, typed and double-spaced with citations of all source material. The Submission deadline is January 13, 2006. First Prize is \$3,000. The national winner also receives airfare and accommodations for him/herself and one parent or guardian to attend UNA USA's Member's Day, held at United Nations Headquarters in March or April of 2005, as an honored guest. There, the winner will receive his or her award in a formal ceremony before UNA-USA's membership. Second Prize is \$1,500, and Third Prize is \$750. Any student wishing to submit an entry this year should contact Education VP Jan Baker at the Columbus Chapter Offices, 487-1300.

We're Moving, Sort Of...

Bridget Corson
Internship Coordinator

At the October 27 meeting of the Columbus Chapter Board of Directors, Resolution 26-R-15 was unanimously approved, which will set in motion the events to move the home office of the Columbus Chapter to where it began some years ago: The Jefferson Center. All Board Members present voted in favor of the measure, and President Eddie Pauline abstained due to his position as a board member with the International Visitor's Council.

Prior to being located in our current offices at 1395 W. 5th Ave, we were located in King Avenue United Methodist Church at 299 King Ave. Prior to that, we were



located at 57 Jefferson Ave, as one of the organizations housed in the Jefferson Center for Learning and the Arts. The passage of 26-R-15 will bring us back to Jefferson Center. In an effort to curtail expenses, the move will create a joint venture between UNACOL and the International Visitor's Council. The two organizations will share office space on

the 1st floor of 57 Jefferson Ave, in the offices formerly occupied by UNICEF and Asian-American Community Services. This cooperative agreement between our two organizations will create a win-win situation for both groups, improving the respective financial situations and bringing UNACOL into Jefferson Center at critical time. The Columbus Council on World Affairs has recently taken up residence in 51 Jefferson, and the Columbus International Program, the Interfaith Association of Central Ohio, and the Institute for International Democracy all have offices in 57 Jefferson. This sets the stage for the creation of an international NGO central area, and improves greatly the ability for all organizations to pool resources.

The anticipated moving date is the end of December, 2005. Further information on the move will be forthcoming in future newsletter editions, and on the chapter's website, www.unacol.org. Further information on the Jefferson Center is available at www.thejeffersoncenter.org.

