

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION-USA Boulder County

Spring 2011 Newsletter



President's Corner

Engaging for Women's Rights

Perhaps it is only by coincidence that many of our activities since the last newsletter have focused on women. We are happy, in any case, to find ourselves in step with UN Millennium Goals 3, 4, and 5, which concentrate the work of the United Nations and civil society on promoting gender equity, reducing child mortality and improving maternal health.

We are getting ready for a big fundraiser on Saturday, May 7, a Spring Festival to support the work of the non-profit, Educate!, at Budadiri Girls School in Uganda. Educate!, founded by Fairview High School graduate Eric Glustrom, equips and mobilizes Ugandan students to help solve the problems of their communities. We chose Budadiri—and Educate!—for this year's project because educating girls is critical in reducing poverty, disease, violence and hopelessness. Please join us at our Spring Festival, May 7. You'll find details inside this newsletter.

In the spirit of women helping women, our UN Day Celebration at the Boulder Public Library in October featured a dramatization of Eleanor Roosevelt's astute campaign for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our International Human Rights Award went to Ellen Marshall, who, in legislative and policy roles—and now with the Good Works Group, an affiliate of the UN Foundation—has been a major player in promoting the rights of women.

The status of the world's women is not only a matter of morality and justice. It is also a political, economic, and social imperative: the world cannot make lasting progress if women and girls are denied their rights and left behind. Nicolas Kristof, whose book, *Half the Sky*, is reviewed in this newsletter, believes that the moral imperative of the 21st century—after the fight against slavery in the 19th and against totalitarianism in the 20th—is equality for women everywhere.



At a dinner we hosted in February, Ed Elmendorf, interim president of UNA-USA, emphasized the crucial advocacy role of UNA chapters, especially since our merger with the UN Foundation. Our advocacy committee has taken up Elmendorf's challenge and is visiting with representatives to promote good relations with the UN. We will continue to press our senators to ratify CEDAW—the UN Convention to Eliminate All forms of Discrimination Against Women.

In other news, we had a good turnout at our John Murphy Reception at the Conference on World Affairs, an opportunity for high school and college students to chat informally with conference participants. And our film and panel on microcredit in Lafayette was a great success. We're working on a second in the series, a film about water and the MDGs, in Nederland, in May.

We regretfully accepted the resignation of stalwart board member and former board president Clovis Morrisson in January, but after more than sixteen years of service to UNA-Boulder County Chapter, he deserves a little time off.

We hope that he—and all of you—will continue to take advantage of the many opportunities to stay involved with our chapter: monthly Dialog Series lectures on Saturday morning at Frasier Meadows; two Discussion Series a month at the main library in Boulder; thrice-yearly dinner-lectures at the Boulder Outlook Hotel. Keep up with these events and more by checking our website: unaboulder.org. If you are not on the email list and would like to be, email us at info@unaboulder.org. See you at Spring Festival.

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Coming Soon

Spring Festival Fundraiser

Saturday, May 7
7478 Goodhue Blvd.
Boulder
2 pm - 5 pm

Membership Report

Our UNA chapter membership stands at 137, but that includes currently lapsed memberships. To support the work of UNA and this chapter, and to renew, please join us by contacting membership committee chair Bruce MacKenzie: b.mackenzie@q.com. This year our membership drive and new member reception is the Spring Festival Fundraiser on May 7. Everyone is welcome.

Our Mission: The UNA-USA is dedicated to strengthening the United Nations System and the role of the United States in that system, and to promoting multilateral efforts to advance the goals of the United Nations Charter.

Action Project ■ *By Nancy Allen*

Spring Festival for Budadiri Girls School

This year the Boulder County Chapter is sponsoring an Educate! program at Budadiri Girls School in the Mubale district of eastern Uganda. Fundraising for the program is the focus of our Spring Festival. The program at Budadiri Girls School has already attracted twenty-two girls who were selected for this unique program because they are motivated to better themselves, their families and their community.

Through the program, junior and senior high school girls learn how to start a business, network in the community and create community initiatives. Students in other Educate! programs make jewelry, bake bread, raise goats, plant trees and even provide microloans. Soon after beginning the Educate! program the Budadiri girls requested and were given a small plot of land for a garden. They grow cabbage and peas to sell and they plan to reinvest in more seeds and vegetables.

Every week the students meet with their competent and attractive teacher/mentor, Violet. Violet is from Mubale and because she knows some of the tribal languages of the area she can communicate well with the girls and has gained their trust. The funds we raise will pay Mentor Violet's salary and transportation costs for two years.

Educating girls is critical in reducing poverty, disease, violence and hopelessness among Ugandan youth—the majority of whom are unemployed. We understand the importance of educating girls, so when Executive Director of Educate! Eric Glustrom, described the financial needs of the girls school we eagerly adopted it for our fundraiser.

Please join us in supporting the Budadiri Girls School at our Spring Festival fundraiser on Saturday, May 7th, 2-5 p.m. at 7478 Goodhue Blvd. in Boulder. The silent auction features a week stay at a cottage on Loch Loman, Scotland, four nights in a condo in Keystone, two nights in a cabin at the YMCA of the Rockies, numerous gift certificates for Boulder area restaurants and much more.

To learn more about the festival and to make a donation for the girls school program, visit our website: www.experienceeducate.org/springfestival. See you at Spring Festival or online. - *Nancy Allen is the Vice President of the Board and Chair of the Spring Festival fundraising committee.*



Mentor Violet and students.



See last page for details!

Educate! ■ *By Nancy Allen*

Our Partner NGO for Action

Educate! is a success story! In an inspired and insightful move, the Ugandan government asked Educate! to write the new social entrepreneurship section of the Ugandan national entrepreneurship curriculum. Educate! was given this opportunity based on its innovative entrepreneurship curriculum and many successes, including First Prize Winner of the 2009 Pan African Award for Entrepreneurship in Education.

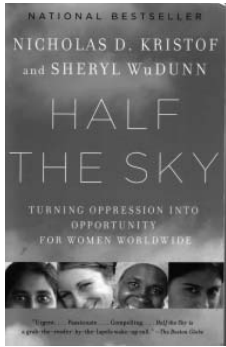
The social entrepreneurship curriculum will be piloted in 2012 and then it will be taught each year to thousands of students from diverse backgrounds across Uganda. The social entrepreneurship curriculum in Uganda is the first of its kind in the world—a world model!

Educate! works with 1,000 students across Uganda and has already graduated 415 young leaders, entrepreneurs and Changemakers. Eric Glustrom, Boulder founder of Educate!, defines a Changemaker as a person who starts a business or community initiative that solves a community challenge, or who works full-time to do so. Community challenges may be related to poverty, disease or environmental degradation. The UN International Labor Organization sees the Educate! entrepreneurial program as an important way to train high school students to be future workers and community leaders, training that is essential in a country where 80% of youth are unemployed.

Daniel Okurut exemplifies a Changemaker. Daniel works tirelessly to create a fuel-efficient stove business and a community tree planting initiative, combating deforestation in both ways. He learned how to bring about change in his Educate! course with a mentor/advisor who helped him learn important leadership skills. Phionah Ntegeka is another competent Changemaker. With enthusiasm for people, she and four other girls started Youth Girls Effort, a community initiative to promote girl's education.

In 2010 Educate! began the Alumni Program for its graduates. This program is supported through partnership with kindred NGO, Global Agents. The Alumni Program provides resources, business startup support, a lifetime alumni network and mentoring.

Last year Educate! raised \$358,000, exceeding its goal and nearly doubling funds raised in the previous year. Yes, a success story! We are proud to support this innovative NGO with an entrepreneurial spirit.

Book Review ■ *By Rosa Baum****Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide***

Book by Nicholas Kristoff and Sheryl WuDunn; Knopf Publication Group, 2009.

The numbers are stunning and the story heart-stopping. Nicholas Kristoff and Sheryl WuDunn's *Half the Sky* is a must for anyone who claims to be a feminist. If you care about women worldwide, these stories are bound to enrage you. The book reads smoothly, incorporating both data and stories. It

is captivating and intriguing.

The title comes from an ancient Chinese proverb used by Mao Zedong, and the book shows that women truly do "hold up half the sky."

To rise out of poverty, developing nations simply must educate and empower women. The condition of women in many countries is a devastating and overlooked injustice. The authors compare it convincingly to slavery.

WuDunn and Kristoff push hard the idea of grassroots problem solving. That's where they see the most potential for change. While international aid is needed, grassroots organizations can do many of the same things, for example, curing sick mothers, and also transforming them into nurses.

I found myself wanting to visit the hospitals and schools described in these chapters. The book mentions philanthropists who donated money and then followed it to Africa or Asia. It seems like the most gratifying work

a citizen of a developed nation could do. Reading of the atrocities faced by pregnant young women, for example, I wanted to leap out of my chair and go start a hospital in Ghana.

At times I found myself angry at the authors because they criticize philanthropic organizations that I support, outing them for not doing the most efficient and responsive things. And sometimes I felt I was reading the same story-line twice, simply with different names and in a different setting.

But, as my family gathered around our dining room table to give our yearly charity donations, I found myself pushing for organizations listed in *Half the Sky*. When my mom was arguing to donate money for art classes, I couldn't help but counter with an argument for Afghan elementary education. We ended up donating to both. *Half the Sky* is a reminder that art education in Boulder is a luxury.

If you are looking for a book to light a fire under you to do something for a global cause, *Half the Sky* truly is the one to read.

Editor's note: Rosa Baum is a senior and honors student at Boulder High School, and was an officer of the Model UN team—and contributor to our newsletter. She hopes to major in political science and international relations, and to continue her studies of Spanish and Arabic. Rosa is a recipient of the Boettcher Scholarship but as we go to press, she has not decided where she will go to college. We wish all the best for this dedicated young woman with a brilliant career ahead. JG

Hope and Despair: Righting the Wrongs Against Women and Girls ■

As we prepare for the Spring Festival fundraiser for the Budadiri Girls School in Uganda, the plight of girls and women around the world comes into sharp focus—a glaring humanitarian crisis. A worldwide response is needed, from governmental policies and laws, through the courts, and through economic and cultural change—with the flow of force going in both directions. In the past decade combating this humanitarian tragedy is coupled with recognition that gender equality and empowerment of women are fundamental to the economic, social and political health of a country, and the role that women should have in conflict resolution and peace-making is voiced repeatedly. This article highlights efforts to end abuse of all forms and to empower women and girls everywhere.

SCR 1325. This year is the 10th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325: Recognizing Women's Vital Roles in Achieving Peace and Security. SCR1325 is international legislation for the **protection** of women and increased **participation** of women in peace-building. On

this anniversary, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said, "The international community can point to some successes...but this...is a somber occasion. Our achievements over the past decade have not met our own expectations. Women are still excluded from peace processes. When conflicts end and international aid begins to come in, it is still not geared to the needs of girls and women. And most tragically and strikingly, women and girls still suffer gender-based violence...the international community is still failing to protect." (Lyric Thompson for Open Democracy, September 29, 2010. Also see Women Count for Peace 1325+10.)

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of SCR1325 Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams pointed out the truth of all treaties, laws and resolutions—that 1325 is merely a tool and just words on paper, saying, "You have to have civil society involved pressing government to see that these policy tools are used. Governments are not enthusiastically enforcing these policies if civil society isn't push-

ing.” Civil society is us.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Commonly known as the Women’s Treaty, this convention was adopted by the General Assembly 31 years ago and ratified by all but a few countries, including the United States, Somalia, Sudan and Iran. Twice in the past 30 years CEDAW was approved by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and blocked by conservatives, and in 2002 it was weakened with the addition of RUDs (restrictions, understandings, declarations). President Obama supports CEDAW and in March ‘09 sent it to the State Department for review; Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is a staunch proponent.

Finally, after years of inaction, on 18 November 2010, CEDAW was given a standing-room-only hearing before the Judiciary Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law, chaired by Senator Dick Durbin (D-Ill.). In testimony before the committee, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues Melanne Verwee said, “Where women cannot participate fully and equally in their societies, democracy is a contradiction in terms, economic prosperity is hampered, and stability is at risk. Standing up against the appalling violations of women’s human rights around the globe, and standing with the women of the world, is what ratifying the Women’s Treaty is about.” Ambassador Verwee gave several examples of the power of CEDAW to help women, including gaining land rights for women in Uganda (International Law Prof Blog, November 19, 2010).

The task now is to persuade Senator John Kerry, chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to put CEDAW on the agenda for debate. As of this writing it is not. We are urged to pressure Senator Kerry and our senators to get this done. Meanwhile, **House Resolution 20** of the 112th Congress was introduced on 5 January 2010 by Rep. Lynn Woolsey (CA-6) urging the Senate to ratify CEDAW. On 1 March the bill was referred to the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health and Human Rights. Stay tuned, unlikely as it is to pass. Similarly, because two-thirds of the Senate must vote to ratify a treaty, once again ratification is unlikely even if CEDAW makes it to a Senate vote. It is easy to misinform uninformed constituents on this one, particularly regarding U.S. sovereignty issues, abortion issues—and the hilarious “We might not be able to celebrate Mother’s Day.”

UN Women. On 24 February 2011 at the 55th annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, this new UN entity was launched under the guidance of Executive Director Michelle Bachelet, the high-profile former president of Chile. UN Women brings all the UN bodies that address women’s issues under one leadership. With a budget set at \$500 million, UN Women must rely on voluntary contributions from governments and non UN sources, even individuals. In turn, the goals of UN Women are to support inter-governmental bodies such as the Commission on the Status of Women in

policy formulation and development of global standards, to help member states implement policies and standards with technical and financial support, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society. In a recent interview with Foreign Policy, Michelle Bachelet said that prime ministers and presidents must be convinced with strong arguments and data that they should not miss the contributions of women in society and should direct their economic and political decisions accordingly. The creation of UN Women is celebrated with optimism and may be the needed facilitator of CEDAW and SCR 1325.

International Violence Against Women Act (IWA-WA). This U.S. bipartisan bill sponsored by John Kerry in the Senate and Rep. William Delahunt in the House would have made preventing and responding to violence against women of greater importance in U.S. foreign policy. Unfortunately, after a rousing hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee it died when the 111th Congress adjourned. Could it be reborn?

S 414: International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act of 2011. This bill, sponsored by Senators Dick Durbin and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) was referred to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on 17 February 2011. The bill provides that child marriage is a violation of human rights and ending it should be a foreign policy goal, and that enhanced educational opportunities for girls and economic opportunities for women are critical to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the U.S. global health and development goals. This bill authorizes the President to create a multi-year strategy to prevent child marriage and promote the empowerment of girls at risk, and amends the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 by requiring that State Department reports on human rights practices include the status of child marriage where it occurs. As of this writing, S414 is not on the agenda of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This is another bill that should be on everyone’s fax-your-senator list.

Commission on Information and Accountability for Women’s and Children’s Health. This commission was launched by co-chairs Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada and Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete at the World Health Organization in Geneva on 26 January, 2011. The commission will create an accountability framework for both donors and recipients, tracking a \$40 billion initiative to the Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health. This Strategy was created after the September 2010 UN Summit on the MDGs when it was clear that goals relating to women’s and children’s health were far behind target. In his opening comments Harper said, “Improvements to the health, education and living conditions of millions of women and children will mean a wave of hope that will ripple through the developing world.” Accountability—about time.

Girl Up. Girl Up, with the slogan “For Girls, by Girls” is a campaign of the United Nations Foundation, launched last year. Girl Up gives American girls the op-

portunity to broaden their horizons and compassion by supporting United Nations programs for the world's most isolated girls. Our girls give a "High Five" to girls around the world by donating \$5 and by participating in Girl Up activities. At Girlup.org girls learn about the program

and what they can do to help others. If you know a girl, any girl, encourage her to go to GirlUp.org—she will be inspired to learn more and do more for girls she will never meet but will get to know through compassion. - *Judith Green, UNA-BC board member*

The Universal Periodic Review: Boulder Chapter Input ■

When the United Nations dissolved the Commission on Human Rights and established the Human Rights Council in 2006, an accountability mechanism, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), was created. Every year, 48 member states are required to give an accounting of their human rights record and activities, describing both failings and remedies.

In August 2010 the U.S. Department of State submitted our UPR to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. In preparation, the State Department held "town halls" and asked for input from civil society organizations and agencies. UNA-USA asked chapters to submit briefs addressing any topic of concern. In response, Clovis Morrisson wrote a brief titled "Ratify CEDAW!" The following are excerpts:

"If Bernard Lewis is right in his book, *What Went Wrong*, the severely limited role for women is a major reason why Islamic societies lost their leading cultural, scientific and economic positions in the world prior to 1900. In contemporary times the administrations of the United States have tried in many ways—some wise, some foolish—to persuade modern Islamic states to treat women with the same respect accorded men, maintaining that unleashing their brain power would be of major assistance in moving those states into the 21st century. And yet, the lecturing U.S. refuses to ratify CEDAW. We believe that this treaty, of all the UN treaties currently not ratified by the U.S. Senate, deserves the support of our nation.

"When our leaders hector Islamic states about their treatment of women, those states throw our refusal to ratify CEDAW right back at us, as they should. Additionally, the U.S. was the lead power in negotiating the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. CEDAW is one of the five major human rights treaties designed to enforce the grand principles of that Declaration, many of which address the status of women. Yet we hesitate.

"Opponents are mainly political conservatives, expressing their agenda relating to women and family. Many argue that treaties including even mild enforcement mechanisms (there is just a reporting committee in CEDAW) intrude on American sovereignty.

"Even some liberals find fault with specific language that could be misinterpreted, but any real problems could be finessed through Reservations. We heartily recommend ratification!"

The UPR can be read on the State Department website. It begins with the Founding Fathers and the Bill of Rights

and gives an historical review of U.S. actions on human rights issues up to 2010 and is interesting in this respect. The UPR addresses some of the concerns submitted by Amnesty International (see AI website), and gives a glowing account of our support of workers rights and collective bargaining—and has one sentence regarding CEDAW saying that President Obama supports the treaty and has asked the Senate to review it. Our next UPR is scheduled for 2014—we'll see what happens. - *Judith Green*

The UN and International Affairs and Geopolitics Discussion Series ■

Our discussion sessions met throughout the winter, with interesting and informative resource persons and lively discussions.

The Geopolitics session on possible resource wars over rare-earth metals was fascinating, and Dr. Jim Burrell of the Colorado Geological Survey provided invaluable background information. Eric Glustrom, co-founder of Educate! school program in Uganda, gave an insightful introduction to the session on educating young people around the world.

The Geopolitical discussion on Kashmir was very enlightening. The resource persons were both born in Srinagar, Kashmir—a Hindu and a Muslim—presenting opposing perspectives. It was a respectful exchange of views, but illustrated the extreme complexity of the Kashmiri issue. As moderator, I am always amazed at the range and depth of knowledge displayed at each session.

The April 21st topic, "Will stability ever come to the Congo?" is with African history professors Drs. Jim Wolf and Jim Scarriff. On April 28th the focus is Egypt and Yemen with CU professors Dr. Willis, on Yemen, and Dr. Echchaibi, on Egypt.

We welcome suggestions for topics and resource persons, at askwok@msn.com; put "discussion" in the subject box. The UN session is on the 3rd Thursday of the month, the Geopolitical is the last Thursday, from 1-3 p.m., main Boulder Public Library. - *Bill Kellogg, Board member*

Tribute ■ *By Bruce MacKenzie, Board member and membership committee chair*

Gratitude to Clovis Morrisson

After nearly seventeen years as a chapter member, and diligent worker and contributor on the Boulder County Chapter Board of the United Nations Association, Clovis is retiring. He was a founding member of our reinstated chapter, along with Ernie Smith, Cathy Wrenn, Deborah Hayes, John Murphy, myself and others, and helped draft the initial documents so that we could be chartered by National UNA.

During the succeeding years, Clovis served as President, Vice President, and Secretary. Every year Clovis orchestrated the Human Rights Award, soliciting nominations, and arranging for the venue and invitations. The event is held around UN Human Rights Day on 10 December. And for many years Clovis headed the Ernest Smith lecture series. Always willing to raise money for the Model UN travel funds and other ventures, Clovis

also solicited applications for the Catherine Wrenn Scholarship Fund.

Before retiring to Boulder, Clovis was on the faculty of the University of North Texas for thirty-one years and is now Professor Emeritus of Political Science.

This year Clovis spoke at our Annual Meeting, presenting "Reflections on Human Rights." As always, he was scholarly and informative. Clovis and his wife Marilyn have greatly contributed to the Common Good of Boulder and his wisdom on our UNA Board will be greatly missed. The Morrissons are moving to College Station, PA, where their son lives.

We wish them all the best, and joy in bringing their many talents to their new community.



UN Day Celebration: Meet Eleanor Roosevelt ■

This year UN Day was celebrated as a joint venture with the Boulder Public Library, where our fun and informative celebration took place. The centerpiece of the celebration was "Hammering Out Human Rights: Eleanor Roosevelt at the United Nations" played by storysmith Susan Marie Frontezak who brought to the stage the likeness, the voice and the calm passion of Mrs. Roosevelt.

Eleanor told her story of being called "ugly" by her mother, self-enhancing friendships, experiences abroad, and as First Lady, forging a political career and social role as activist for laborers, children, women and all who experience discrimination.

In a gently sarcastic tone she told of being asked by President Truman to serve on the Social and Economic Council of the newly-founded UN, but later was appointed Chairman (her words) of the committee charged with developing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Eleanor described humorous conversations with the Russians, telling of her unyielding positions that eventually won the day as the document was hammered into being. At the end of her presentation, Mrs. Roosevelt was given a colorful bouquet of flowers by chapter board member Jyotsna Raj on behalf of those struggling for their rights around the world.

The UN Day Celebration was sponsored in conjunction with Citizens for Global Solutions, Boulder Friends of UNICEF, Model UN Club of CU-Boulder and Model UN Club of Boulder High School. Our co-sponsors were Boulder County Aids Project, Boulder WILPF, the League of Women Voters, Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, United for Human Rights, Zonta Club of Boulder County and Zonta Foothills Club of Boulder County, and Youth for Human Rights International who provided an excellent video of one-minute dramatizations of the meaning and importance of the 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

These organizations had displays and information to distribute, including a display and DVD on Educate!, the focus of our May fundraiser. We thank Zonta Club of Boulder County for the big delicious UN birthday cake.

Boulder H.S. Model UN Team 2010-11

Service, problem solving, and skillful diplomacy were the main goals for the 2010-11 Boulder H.S. Model United Nations team. Highlights include:

- Trained 104 new Model U.N. students and eight potential presiding officers from 10 high schools at two BHS sponsored "Intro to MUN" Saturdays
- Donated \$600 to UNA-Boulder Chapter for the Budadiri Girls School & \$800 for microloans to individuals in underdeveloped states with funds from MUN conference
- Helped other Colorado MUN conferences with presiding officers, logistical support, & resolutions for Beginner Security Councils
- Hosted 4th successful MUN conference
- Over 110 BHS students participated in at least one MUN conference, & over 85 BHS students participated in two or more.
- Many BHS student-delegates wrote and passed resolutions in five MUN conferences—simulating real-world problem solving. The majority of BHS delegates earned recognition for skillful diplomacy.
- Earned "Outstanding Delegation/Team" recognition at Cornell U. MUN out of 23 school divisions with 20 delegates or less. Four BHS delegates earned individual recognition at the Cornell U. MUN.

This year several outstanding team members are graduating, but the 2011-2012 team will be equally strong with our new officers and members. - *Andy Aiken, Faculty Advisor*

International Human Rights Award ■

Ellen Marshall Honored for Work for Women's and Girls' Rights

Ellen Marshall was given the 15th annual International Human Rights Award by the Boulder County Chapter for her many years of work—mostly behind the scenes—on the rights and needs of women and girls. Ellen was nominated for this award by the Zonta Foothills Club of Boulder County.

Ms. Marshall was a staff person for Senator Tim Wirth and a State Department officer, and also worked for the UN Foundation. She has advanced women's health as a consultant to the International Women's Health Coalition and through her company, Good Works Group.

Ellen has coordinated international conferences, perhaps most notably the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, and she has worked directly with groups

of activists trying to improve the lot of women everywhere. Upon receiving the award, Ellen described the highlights of her work on countless women's and girls' concerns including population and women's right to choose issues, child marriage and genital mutilation, material and child health targets of the Millennium Development Goals, and education for girls. Ellen often repeats the theme, "Women's Rights are Human Rights."

A crowd of UNA and Zonta members and guests energized the Sky Lounge of Frasier Meadow Manor on December 10, 2010 to honor Ellen Marshall for her long service on behalf of the rights and needs of women and girls.



Boulder County Chapter Annual Meeting: Jan. 23, 2011 ■

The meeting was recorded by outgoing secretary Deborah Hayes.

President's Report. Chapter president Meg Knox opened the meeting with a review of significant events of 2010, most notably the merger of UNA-USA with the UN Foundation's Better World Fund. Meg noted our member's enthusiasm in carrying out our many projects, but also addressed the need to do a better job of preparing board members for such leadership roles as the presidency.

Election of officers. The nominating committee report was given by Clovis Morrisson, chair. Clovis introduced the nominees for board membership—Gabe Serenyi, Joe Richey and Karen Janson. They were unanimously elected to the board. Returning board members are William Kellogg, Judy Green and Virginia McConnell and returning officers are Meg Knox President, Nancy Allen, Vice President and Tom Cimino, Treasurer. The position of Secretary is still vacant. This year our "guest" speaker was our own long-time board member Clovis Morrisson who presented "Reflections on Human Rights." The following is a synopsis of this thought-provoking address. After the presentation Clovis was asked, "What motivates people to fight for their rights?" Clovis answered, "A desire for freedom." Then came Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Syria—demonstrating this truth.

Reflections on Human Rights. Clovis began by saying that defining "human rights" would take hours of discussion and debate—and this soon became apparent. Rather than trying to define, Clovis presented basic concepts of human rights, beginning with the distinction between individual and group rights. This distinction is reflected in two approaches to government. The "individualism" approach espouses minimum government involvement in

personal affairs, exemplified by opposition to gun control laws and laissez-faire economics, while the group approach holds that individuals fare better when the government or the group itself puts its wellbeing or "rights" over that of the individual, exemplified by cultures that permit child marriage and slavery for the sake of the larger group, or punishment of a tribe member for not supporting the needs of the group, and in economic/political systems like feudalism and Soviet socialism. The former approach prevailed until the Enlightenment, the basis for our Western understanding of human rights.

Next, Clovis described four concepts relating to the "source" of human rights—that they are God-given, that they are derived from human nature, that they are utilitarian and arise because society works best when the greatest number of its members have the greatest rights and privileges, and fourth, that we give rights to ourselves because we want to be treated as well as we possibly can by our government, for example, the right to vote.

Clovis pointed out that the first two "sources" make human rights easy, while the last two are complicated because they are culturally derived and may correspond to religious beliefs and economic systems, and are not considered universal. The universality of human rights is going to take a long time to prevail Clovis said, evidenced by the weakness of enforcement mechanisms. However, then the UN intervenes to stop atrocities, overriding state sovereignty claims, the acceptance of human rights as universal is strengthened. According to Clovis, the best example of an effective enforcement mechanism is the European Human Rights Convention System that has heard over 150,000 human rights cases, referring several hundred to its Court. Also the Inter-American Court of Human Rights established in 1979 and based in Costa Rica, and a similar court in Africa give hope that "human rights" are seen as legal rights, not mere concepts.

Meet Our New Board Members ■

Gabe Serenyi. Gabe was born in Budapest, Hungary and moved with his family to Austria prior to the invasion by Soviet forces. The family emigrated to the U.S. in 1950. Gabe was awarded a scholarship to Dartmouth College where he majored in political science and then joined the U.S. Navy as an officer. Gabe retired from active duty after four years and joined the human resources department at General Electric. He also held human resources management positions with NREL in Golden and with the City of Fort Collins. After the death of his wife, Gabe raised their children on his own. He is remarried and lives in Boulder. From his youth, Gabe has supported the work of the UN, and while at Dartmouth he was given a summer internship at the UN, cancelled at the last minute for lack of funding. Through his nephew, Peter Serenyi, Jr. who works for the United Nations Development Programme in Bratislava, Gabe stays informed of UN work in that part of the world.



Karen Janson. After attending several board meetings, Karen is now a member and has taken on the task of updating our email list and sending out notices. Karen comes from Grand Rapids, MI, graduated from high school in Clearwater, Florida and earned a degree in Russian Language at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. After cross-country travels, she settled in Boulder. Matching her travels, Karen's career has been eclectic, from the defense industry in Boston to assembly line in Redwood City, California. Karen says that these varied experiences with "all walks of life" shaped her sense of justice for all people everywhere and she brings to the board a strong dedication to world peace, unity and resilience.



Joe Richey. Joe describes himself as "responding globally and locally to underdog and quixotic causes" and is an independent researcher, reporter, translator and poet, having studied with Allen Ginsberg and Ed Dorn. Joe taught Literature and Writing in Costa Rica and at CU and Naropa University in Boulder. He has traveled extensively in Nicaragua, Argentina and Costa Rica. Motivated by the infamous Bush v. Gore decision, he has advocated for election reform through Democracy for Colorado, Common Cause, Coloradans for Voting Integrity and the Colorado Democratic Party. Currently Joe serves on the Best Practices and Vision Commission, Elections Division, Office of the Secretary of



Meeting the UNA-USA President ■

Visiting Colorado in February, our UNA-USA interim president, Ed Elmendorf, urged Boulder County Chapter members to make sure that our Congressional delegation hears from all of us about our support for the UN.

To the thirteen UNA members who met with him over dinner on February 26, Elmendorf's message was essentially that, with the merger with the UN Foundation, we UNA members must keep conveying our message of strong popular support for the UN, something the UNF can't provide. As he put it, when the UNF lobbies members of Congress, they can ask, "So, whom do you represent? Ted Turner?" But UNA members can say, "I represent myself, I am one of your constituents." Emails to our representatives are fine and results are tallied. A letter (which needs to be FAXed) will be read and may be replied to.

Ed Elmendorf stressed four points to make to our representatives: (1) support continued U.S. funding of the UN and oppose replacing the assessment system with "voluntary contributions"; (2) support U.S. ratification of Law of the Seas, which has a good chance, and CEDAW, which has some Congressional support as well; (3) emphasize the importance of the Universal Periodic Review process of the Human Rights Council; (4) urge continued support for the Millennium Development Goals.

For more information on the UNA-USA 2011 Advocacy Agenda go to unausa.org, and under Advocacy, click on 2011.

Boulder County Chapter members engaged Elmendorf in a spirited discussion of news from Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and other hot spots, and the agonizing question of Afghanistan. When pressed for his opinion, Elmendorf said that ideally the U.S. would withdraw within two years and an international presence through the UN would bring greater stability to the area.

Ed Elmendorf was the interim president during the transition year as UNA-USA merged with the UN Foundation. With the merger complete, UNA-USA is now a Program of the UN Foundation. On March 15 Tim Wirth announced the new national executive director, Patrick Madden. - *Deborah Hayes, Board member*

State. Since 2005, with support from two NGOs, Joe has been uncovering waste, fraud and abuse in the Dept. of Homeland Security. Joe is a proponent of "tithing time" to resist military solutions to humanitarian problems, converting the U.S. military to an international disaster relief agency supporting international cooperation—a long-needed Great Conversion.

Impact ■ *By Kristin Shewfelt, board member and coordinator of film/discussion series*

Microcredit: A Brief Introduction

Primary among the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger by addressing the needs of the staggering number of people living under the international poverty line of \$1.25 per day. While the total number has declined from 1.8 billion to 1.4 billion people between 1990 and 2005, the UN reports that the 2008-2009 global economic downturn pushed an estimated 64 million more people into extreme poverty in 2010.

Microcredit is a small amount of money loaned to a client by a bank or other institution and is considered one of the most effective ways to combat worldwide poverty. Indeed, many believe that success in achieving any of the eight MDGs depends on the availability and success of microcredit in areas of grinding poverty. The UN declared 2005 as the International Year of Microcredit. The majority of microcredit institutions started as NGOs seeking to alleviate poverty by providing small, uncollateralized loans to low-income self-employed individuals who traditionally lack access to the formal banking sector and are thus underserved.

As an example, the recent UNA Boulder County film and discussion series showcased the Lakewood-based NGO Friendship Bridge and its Microcredit Plus program that combines small loans with informal participatory education for rural Mayan women in Guatemala. The average 6 to 12 month loan is \$320, at 2% interest. As loans are repaid the money is loaned again, multiplying the effect of each dollar loaned. The women form groups of seven to twenty-five members called Trust Banks. Each Trust Bank elects officers, creates business plans, co-guarantees

individual member's loans, and participates in the education sessions every month during loan repayment meeting. The women form bonds of support and friendship as they work on their small businesses—growing fruits and vegetables, making woven and embroidery products and raising livestock for sale.

The benefits of microcredit include: greater financial stability for families; better nutrition, hygiene and health care; reduced spouse abuse; increased school attendance, especially for girls; empowerment of women; lower birth rate. The global microcredit portfolio is estimated at US \$65 billion, versus US \$12 billion in 2004. But there are challenges to the microcredit model.

According to the International Association of Microfinance Investors, many microfinance institutions (MFIs) are now regulated entities that use commercial sources of capital such as microcredit loans, equity investment and deposits for profit. There are pros and cons with this evolution.

On the pro side, Deutsche Bank has been involved in microfinance since 1997, working successfully with 100 microfinance institutions in 41 countries. However, the growing commercialization of MFIs is spurring a dramatic increase in outstanding loans. Some banks engage in predatory lending, luring borrowers into excessive debt when the borrower is unlikely to succeed. As a result, a global initiative is underway to create strong consumer protection principles and a certification process for microfinance institutions (www.smartcampaign.org).

To learn more about the global microfinance community, see www.microfinancegateway.org.

Film & Discussion Series ■

This new series is off and running with excellent short films and discussions on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and related topics. The first film and panel, "Microcredit: Its Origins, Present Practices and Future Impact" took place at the Boulder Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Lafayette on 17 February. We extend our thanks to BVUUF for hosting this informative event.

The film "Breaking Through: Year of Microcredit—the UN in Action" was followed by a panel discussion and Q&A session. The panelists briefly described their work and took questions from the enthusiastic audience. Barb Heverly spoke about the NGO BeadforLife of which she is Business Director. BeadforLife helps eradicate extreme poverty by finding markets for Ugandan women who turn colorful recycled paper into beads and jewelry. Karen Larson, Executive Director of the Lakewood-based Friendship Bridge described the organization's Microcredit Plus program that combines small loans with education for rural

Mayan women in Guatemala. Jonathan Hanst described the Boulder County Circles Campaign that pairs wealthier families with those trying to rise out of poverty. With the help and friendship of the "ally" family Circles Campaign families set and achieve goals unique to their needs.

As this newsletter goes to press we are working on the next film and discussion event. The film is "Water First: Reaching the Millennium Development Goals" showing that access to clean water is essential to the success of all eight goals. The location and date are not finalized but will likely be in Nederland, in May. Watch your emails for the announcement and plan to be surprised by what you learn. Board members Kristin Shewfelt and Bill Kellogg are the organizers of this series.

Treasurer's Report: As of March 2011

General Fund	\$14,742.48	Scholarship Fund	\$10,482.93
Student Support	\$2667.00	Educate! Fund	\$6,522.91

Calendar

Additional Information Inside or visit www.unaboulder.org!

Chapter board meetings: Open to the membership and guests; on the second Tuesday of each month at 5 pm, 3rd floor conference room, First Congregational Church, Broadway and Pine, Boulder.

General membership meetings: this year the membership meeting will be in May at the Spring Festival Fundraiser, Saturday, May 7. Article inside.

UN Day and Human Rights Day: Annual celebrations of the work of the UN family, in October and December (see articles for details).

The UN in the World Today Dialog Series: First Saturday of each month at 10 am, Fraiser Meadows Retirement Community.

The UN and International Affairs Discussion Series. Third Thursday of the month, 1-3 p.m., Boulder Public Library.

Geopolitics Discussion Series: Last Thursday of the month, 1-3 p.m., Boulder Public Library.

Ernie K. Smith Foreign Policy Dinner Lectures (formerly called the Athenaeum Lectures): three dinners with guest lecturers, fall, winter and spring. Watch for the blue-card announcement.

Credits

Newsletter Editor: Judith Green

assisted by Kristin Shewfelt

Layout and Design: Lindsay Konzak

Mailing: Kristin Shewfelt and volunteer team

Printed by Colt Reproduction

Coming Soon:

Spring Festival Fundraiser

Saturday, May 7

2 pm - 5 pm

Details Inside!



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Boulder County Chapter
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TO:

**What is SCR1325?
See inside for the answer!**