



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA (WA DIVISION)

A People's Movement for the United Nations

April 2011 Newsletter – Vol 3, No 4

**Mark your diary! The 2011 UNAA National Conference will be hosted by UNAAWA 4-7 August 2011.
The main Conference will be on 5th and 6th August 2011.
Contact the office to get on our Conference Update email list.**

Visit us online at www.unaa-wa.org.au for more information about our upcoming events!

President's Message

Following the floods and bush fires in Australia, the past month has seen turmoil throughout the world. The UN Association New Zealand reports that the citizens of Christchurch are still feeling aftershocks from the devastating earth quake. Many residents have moved away from the city, unable to access their homes near the CBD. We have all seen the graphic images of devastation in Japan. It seems inconceivable how the people and the country will recover. The people of Libya have also suffered during the uprising in that country. The initiative of the United Nations followed lengthy discussions by parties to the UN and the Security Council. UNAA President Robert Hill commented on the UNAA Teleconference that the parties to the United Nations worked in unity to address the situation in Libya.

This month UNAAWA farewells its patron His Excellency Ken Michael AC who completes his 5 year term as State Governor. The secretary has sent congratulations and best wishes to the Michaels on behalf of the members. The Association will invite the incoming Governor, Malcolm McCusker, to be its patron.

UNAAWA will be well represented on ANZAC Day with Joseph Caruso attending the Perth, Kings Park ceremony. Carolyne Gatward, Vice-President will be attending the Fremantle Dawn Service and Judith Parker attending the Turkish, Australia, New Zealand and British services at Gallipoli.

Planning for the 2011 National Conference is well underway and registrations are coming in. Registration forms are available at the office and on the UNAAWA website. Early registration from our members would be appreciated. An application has been lodged with Lotterywest for assistance to bring people from rural regions to the conference. The environment committee are planning a bus trip to follow the conference. The following new members have joined the committee: Paul Elkingham in the role of Sponsorship officer, Jade Campbell as Registration officer, Jessica Watts providing assistance in designing the program, Ester Steingiesser is kindly organising the conference badges. Their support is much appreciated. Please check the advertisement in this newsletter for other positions available.

Sincere thanks to the volunteers who keep our office open on a daily basis. The committee regretfully accepted the resignation of Donald Chandraratna this month. Donald has gone on an assignment overseas. His contribution to our recent strategic planning process kept us all on focus. We look forward to Donald re-joining the organisation once he returns to Perth. Finally, thank you to Elsie Tester and her team of helpers for arranging a successful lunch to raise funds for the Yolande Frank Memorial Award 2011.

Judith A. Parker AM DSJ President

Diary Dates/Events

April

- 20 Chinese Language Day at the UN (in mandarin)
22 International Mother Earth Day
23 World Book and Copyright Day
25 World Malaria Day (WHO)

May

- 8-9 Time for Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives during the Second World War
15 International Day of Families
22 World Water Day
-

Human Rights Committee

Welcome to our new members who attended at our last meeting. Great to have you on board!

We were delighted to hear from our guest Judyth Watson, a volunteer with the Coalition for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Detainees, who attended at our last Human Rights Committee meeting. She discussed with us some of the current statistics and issues facing refugees, detainees and asylum seekers in Australia, especially WA. It was a pleasure to engage with an organisation so connected with the local community. We look forward to working with them in the future.

A working committee was also established to work on possible wording for a resolution for the National Conference on related issues. Please contact Kylie at secretary@unaa-wa.org.au or by calling the office if you are keen to be involved in drafting that document. Our **next meeting** is at **12 noon on Friday 29 April**, all are welcome!

Environment Committee

The Environment committee is in preliminary planning of a South West Tour for members and visitors attending the UNAA national conference in August. In brief the tour will inspect post-mining rehabilitation where once ugly gaping unsightly mining pits were operating, and now have been returned to highly productive agricultural grazing lands and also into native forests .

A further excursion is planned to visit in the lower southern region endangered flora, natural habitat and endangered animal species. Western Australia holds some of the most rare and unique taxa plant species' and natural species on the edge of extinction, such as the Worly. We have obtained approval to visit the Bemax /Cables sands post mining operations located at Wonnerup [north of Busselton] on the tour.

Book Club

BOOK REVIEW

Stolen Girl

Authors: Trina Saffioti and Norma MacDonald Publisher: Magabela Books 2011-04-10

This beautifully illustrated children's book begins with the story of the Stolen Generation. The book sensitively tells the story of a young aboriginal girl who was taken away from her mother and grew up in the strict regime of a mission. She remembers and dreams of her life at home with her mother, the food they ate and their way of life. Life in the children's home is described from a child's point of view.

The last section of the book reads “With a deep breath, she turns the key in the lock. The door swings open and she takes her first step towards home. And so comes a glimmer of hope for a young girl taken from all she knows and loves.”

Trina Saffioti’s grandmother was taken away from her family when she was young. *Stolen Girl* is a fictional story based on what might have happened to her grandmother. This author has sensitively told the story of many aboriginal children of the stolen generation. Trina is descended from the Gugu Yalangi people of far north Queensland. Norma MacDonald, the illustrator is descended from the Yamitji people of the Gascoyne region and the Nyungar people of the South west of Western Australia.

This is a book every parent should read their child, every teacher should read their class and every adult should read. It is believed that over 100,000 children were taken away from their families to implement a government policy in Australia to remove Aboriginal and Torres Islander children from their families.

I have read *Stolen Girl* to my children in the hope that they will understand the injustice done to the aboriginal tribes within Australia. In 2008, in the spirit of reconciliation, the Prime Minister of the day, Kevin Rudd, made a historic apology on behalf of the Australian Government to people of stolen generations and their families.

Reviewer: Judith A. Parker

Positions Vacant!

Become part of a vibrant organisation, assist the conference committee. Please notify Judith (President UNAAWA) at the office if you can assist with these tasks.

1. **Gala Dinner facilitator:** Arrange table seating for the dinner; work with the caterer Metro Hotel to decorate the tables. Arrange a small gift for each attendee. Produce a seating plan for the dinner. Supervise preparation of the menu for the table. Produce dinner tickets. Arrange gifts for the speaker and Host for the evening
2. **Workshop facilitator:** Arrange placement of workshops Saturday 6th August. Provide question sheets for workshops. Check leader and scribe are present. Give time warnings

Postcards for Sale - 50 cents each or 4 with envelopes for \$2.00

The first in the UNAAWA series of Declarations of Human Rights Cards is now available. Card Number 1 shows Amanda Chow’s illustration of Article 1 of the Declaration. The Article is printed on the back. Amanda was the winner of the Yolande Frank Memorial Award 2010.

Further Resources

- **The United Nations Information Centre for Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific:** <http://www.un.org.au>
- **The United Nations Youth Association Australia (UNYA) WA Division:** <http://wa.unya.org.au/>
- **For international updates, sign up for UN Wire:** http://www.smartbrief.com/un_wire/index.jsp
- **Read more about the Millennium project:** www.unmillenniumproject.org

www.unaa-wa.org.au

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