



United Nations Association of Australia  
WA Division

Volume 6, issue 6

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# UNAA WA Newsletter

## President's Report Judith A. Parker AM DSJ

### Special points of interest:

- Check out page 2 for the upcoming UNAA Conference 2011 speakers list.
- The re-imaged 'UN Youth Australia
- UNAA WA International Ambassador Joseph Caruso writes on World Environment Day— June 5.
- Upcoming AGM: Sunday 21st August 2011 at 2 pm. Venue: UNAA WA Subia-co offices.
- Read the UNAA WA's Resolution for Refugees.

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A small committee is working on a resolution to be put to the National Meeting of UNAA in August expressing concern at the language used by the media when reporting on issues relating to refugees and asylum seekers. The draft resolution will be circulated to members for comment before forwarding to National for consideration.

Another committee is working on arrangements for the training program UNAAWA will host on behalf of the Australian Immigrant and Refugee women's alliance. The program is open to immigrant and refugee women aged 18 to 30 and will provide training in application writing, CV development, and self esteem. The skills learnt will assist young women to gain study places, employment and contribute to the community. The program is funded by the federal government. The meeting room at our office building will be used for the 3 day session on July 1, 2, and 3.

The planning for the conference is now intense and I thank the team of volunteers working to bring about a successful occasion. We need registrations now so please consider sending in your registration and encouraging others to attend. The contribution of young people is essential for this conference. Encourage your local member or council to sponsor a year 12 student to attend on Friday and Saturday to hear an excellent line up of speakers and participate in workshops. It is hoped that WA women will attend the status of women meeting on Thursday afternoon Aug 4<sup>th</sup> 2-4pm. At this meeting up to 30 women will discuss issues relating to women. This event is free if you are registered for the conference.

Please contact me on email: [judithannparker@bigpond.com](mailto:judithannparker@bigpond.com).

If you would like to attend.

On Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June I attended the public forum "WA's Forests at the crossroads presented by the WA Forest Alliance. This forum provided an excellent debate regarding the situation with WEA Forests [see write up in this newsletter] This issue will be followed up at the UNAA Conference by Speaker on the International Year of Forests as part of the Saturday morning panel and discussion on Millennium Development Goal 7 Ensure Environmental sustainability. Make sure you are there to take part in this discussion.

This coming week I will attend the launch of new research into Elder Abuse. It is most important that we all are mindful of the human rights of the elderly members of our community.

A public forum will be held on June 23<sup>rd</sup> to mark the UN Day in support of victims of torture. Prof. Derrick Silove will discuss "The impact of Detention on the Mental Health of Asylum Seekers" Curtin University BankWest Lecture theatre Building 200 Bentley Campus 6.30 to 8.30

The AGM of UNAAWA takes place on Sunday August 21<sup>st</sup> at 2pm. All positions are vacant. Please consider nominating for a position on the committee and ensure this vital organisation continues its essential work. The 2010/11 team have worked hard to build up the credibility of the organisation, be part of its continuous growth.



## National Conference Update

We have received confirmation from the following individuals to speak at the upcoming National Conference speakers confirmed:

**Christopher Woodthorpe:** Millennium Goals

**Hon. Robyn McSweeney:** Minister for Women's Interest to address Status of Women meeting.

**Eversley Mortlock:** WA Author and a Director of OXFAM- speak on Gender Equity

**Rev. Tim Costello:** Director of World Vision- Elimination of Poverty

**Benson Saulo:** Australia's 2011 Youth Representative to UN will speak on International Year of Youth and will be dinner speaker "The influence on young people on the achievements of the MDG's. Benson is the first indigenous person to receive this award.

**Robert Hill** will chair the opening ceremony.

**Joseph Caruso,** UNAAWA Global Representative will chair a panel on Saturday morning discussing the International Year of Youth, The International Year of Forests and the International Year of Chemistry. Interactive discussions will take place on the 8 MDG's during the Saturday sessions. Each discussion will be chaired by a community leader who will encourage the development of positive initiatives towards the achievement of the goals.

**Conference Dinner:** UNAA Division Presidents will host tables at the dinner. The dinner host will be Diana Warnock, previously member for Perth, State Parliament and well-known radio journalist. She is a strong supporter of UNAA WA.

**Sponsorship:** Paul Elkington, the sponsorship officer is working hard to secure sponsorship. Woolworths has agreed to sponsor some of the catering costs for the National Meeting. An application is into Lotteries Commission to fund the attendance of 10 rural, regional and remote delegates from various parts of WA. Politicians are being encouraged to sponsor a year 10/12 student to the conference. UNAA has an application in to fund delegates from Pacific Islands.

**Support of UNAAWA members:** Many members have taken on specific tasks such as registrations, organisation of the bus trip, media releases, gala dinner arrangements, production of badges, school student's coordinator. Conference updates.

**Meeting with Metro Hotel:** I am meeting with Metro Hotel Functions Coordinator to finalise plans in Mid June. Registrations are coming in slowly.

**Judith A. Parker** Conference Planning Committee Chair.



## UNYA Re-badged: Welcome, UN Youth Australia



With the presidency of UNYA National President Nicky Vreugdenhil drawing to a close, one of his many reforms will have a lasting impact on the organisation. The United Nations Youth Association of Australia is no more - meet the new UN Youth Australia.

This new name is a positive step for our organisation. It takes away the 'stuffiness' of the older name and actually promotes us for what we are - a collection of youth motivated by the principles of the United Nations. With this new image, we can better work to engage young Australians with the local, national and international issues that matter to them. Conveniently, in the acronym-rich world of NGOs, UN Youth Australia can also be shortened to UNYA.

The past twelve months have seen UNYA nationalise many of its operations and branding, resulting in more streamlined efforts and less duplication. A large part of this has been the result of Nicky's effective leadership style. Nicky has always kept the interests of UNYA's divisions at heart while never losing sight of national goals and outcomes, and his ability to help build consensus amongst UNYA divisions has resulted in many long-lasting reforms that will

## Join Us! Volunteer Positions Vacant

### **Assistance with catering:** Immigrant and Refugee

Women's Alliance.

July 1,2,3. Assistance is required to prepare, serve and tidy up: Morning tea 10.30 each day, afternoon tea 3pm each day and lunch 12.30 each day. If you can assist at any of these times please contact Judith on 95272438 or email [judithannparker@bigpond.com](mailto:judithannparker@bigpond.com).

**Catering for National Meeting :** Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> August morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. Shopping for juice and food items on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August and on the day. Please contact Judith [as above].

Catering for these functions will take place at the meeting room UNAOWA office Subiaco

**Registration Desk volunteer :** Staff the registration desk for the AGM Sunday August 21<sup>st</sup>. Check financial members and distribute papers.



## Letter from the UNA WA International Representative.

Dear Madam President, Executive and Members,

### **UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT DAY 5 JUNE 2011**

Our planet of land, sea and air is constantly under threat from manmade, industrial factors and natural disasters with impacts to the wellbeing and longevity of our greater natural environment, human livelihoods, food production, water and atmosphere quality in which we all share a connection.

The current ongoing international and Australian debate encompassing Environmental Corporate Social Responsibility, challenges, solutions of “the protection and safekeeping” to the ecology biosphere terrestrial and oceans of the planet, namely, the principles set out in the United Nations global compact form the ethical foundation on global sustainability, to ensuring that future generations enjoy a healthy environment, stable economic and social enduring life living standard, are all very much in the forefront of modern day headlines.

The United Nations (six) compact principles of universal, environmental and social principles, of sustainability principles generally cover, but are not limited to:

- Supporting environmental strategic management
- Compliance with Human Rights
- Analysing ecological and social impacts
- Implementing sustainable programming and monitoring
- Constant review of programs

How can we assist a more sustainable world?

Irrespective of NGO corporate and Government agenda, the International recognised and accepted Model ISO14001 (Environmental Certification) it comes down to the individual initiative to:

- Increase awareness to the range of sustainability of products, goods and services, he or she purchases.

- Reduce carbon footprint by use of emission free and friendly goods and services and initiatives.

- Education and implementing activities that are responsible to our environment.

Currently in Australia, the debate on Carbon Tax and emissions reduction is alive and complex. There is a real opportunity to each of us to make our mark on Australia's Climate “Carbon Footprint” Strategy, by taking into account, social governance and sustainable commitment to the land, sea and oceans which support our human survival and habitation.

Protecting our environment is our core and first fundamental principle in moral, ethical and social value.

Your heart will allow you the feeling, your mindset will allow you to make the decision and your actions will impact on the world that we wish to save for our future generations.

Yours sincerely

**JOSEPH A. CARUSO**  
**UNA WA International Representative**

## Notice of Annual General meeting—UNAA WA

Notice is hereby given the Annual General Meeting of the United Nations Association of Australia WA division will take place at 2pm Sunday August 21<sup>st</sup> at the meeting room St John of God Serviced Offices 1<sup>st</sup> floor Arcadia Chambers 1 Roydhouse Street Subiaco.

Refreshments will be served at 1.30 pm.

## Queens Birthday Honour

Councillor Janet Davidson has been awarded an OAM in the Queen's birthday honours 2011. Janet Davidson has been a strong supporter of UNAABA over a number of years. She has acted as a referee for several grant applications and more recently hosted a reception at the City of Perth in January for those who attended the UNAABA Holocaust ceremony held in Stirling Gardens January 27<sup>th</sup> 2011.

Janet has been a tireless worker for the advancement of local government and an advocate for women's interests. She has chaired many committees in Perth .

UNAABA congratulates Janet on her justly deserved award. Judith Parker

## The Rally for Justice of our Homeless People

The Human Rights Alliance supported a rally to highlight the endemic problems that continue to increase homelessness, acute and abject, and increase public housing waiting lists in Australia. The Rally for Justice for our Homeless People was held at the steps of WA's State Parliament, midday Thursday June 2nd.

Thereabouts one hundred and fifty people attended to listen to some of our homeless folk, led by keynote speaker Corey Wilkinson, of the Streeties Protest Group, and who has been chronically homeless since 2000. As a result of recent opportunities to highlight the extensiveness of homelessness in Perth and in Western Australia Corey is now employed however he remains homeless. We listened to a young lady, sixteen years of age, who has been homeless in Perth's streets, parks and squats for months. Christian Outreach Workers spoke of human misery, enduring hardships and the neglect by Governments of our homeless folk.

The Leader of the State Opposition, Eric Ripper described to the crowd that both the Labor and Liberal Parties' records in regards to homelessness need to improve and that if he is given the opportunity as a Premier he will work diligently to improve the record. The Greens state parliamentarian Alison Xamon described her disappointment at the continuing disregard of our homeless folk and that we need to implement policies to remedy the current predicaments. State Housing Minister Troy Buswell was invited however declined.

I was the MC and took the opportunity to explain that abject and acute homelessness is different from public housing waiting lists. In WA alone we have more than 13,000 homeless folk, abject and acute, on our streets, and that most of them are not on public housing waiting lists. I described that there are 25,000 applications for WA public housing and these equate to 55,000 to 70,000 people in waiting, who may have to wait up to 16 years and whom most have waited between 2 and 7 years. There are some 800 vacant Perth public houses and some 3,000 around the state waiting for mere refurbishment and some activity to ensure the housing of people. Governments need to prioritise our homeless folk and people on public housing waiting lists in our State and Federal Budgets, where they are generally neglected. I described that the Provision of Shelter is an article within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in terms of propriety, legal and moral, is an urgency that State and Commonwealth Governments must work towards.

We have more than 6,000 of our youth, under 18 years of age on our WA streets, and near 1,500 of these homeless youth are under 12 years of age. We need homeless-friendly precincts within our cities and towns where the homeless will have secure access to safe spaces, drop-in-centres, laundry and shower facilities, treatment centres, access to psychosocial counsellors, and well funded programs to assist people towards employability and transitional housing. In terms of public housing waiting lists these will only be reduced and in terms of waiting periods only through significant amounts of funding. I ended the rally with the fact that Australian governments can "find billions of dollars to unlawfully incarcerate in illegal detention centres the trickle of humanity that seeks Asylum from war and devastation however we can never find the hundreds of millions to at least remedy the extensiveness of homelessness in our cities and towns."

Rallies, with the core purpose of dissemination and in encouraging our parliamentarians to continue highlighting the issues, will occur during July in Fremantle and at State Parliament, and we will be highlighting the issues during Homelessness Week, August 1 to 7.

Gerry Georgatos  
UNAA WA Committee member

## UNAA WA Resolution for Refugees

Dear Editor West Australian Newspaper

13/6/11

For more than 100 years, Australia has played an important role in helping to establish international agreements on human rights – and since the end of World War II, we have been leaders in supporting the rights of people seeking refuge from conflict and persecution.

These rights, and our commitment to uphold them, give protection to people seeking asylum regardless of where they come from or how they arrive.

Australia is a party to the International Convention on Refugees and has agreed that people who meet the definition of a refugee should not be sent to a country where their life or freedom will be threatened. Even where Asylum seekers do qualify as a Refugee, Australia is still obliged not to return people who face the risk of torture or death to their country of origin.

There are 44 million Refugees and Displaced Peoples in the world who need a safe place to live – these are men, women and children who simply hope to live in peace.

Australia of the world's developed nations, ranks 21<sup>st</sup> in providing that safe place.

The United Nations Association of Australia (WA) strongly affirms Australia's responsibilities as a party to these Conventions. We call on all West Australians to open their hearts and minds so that people seeking refuge receive a compassionate and fair hearing and a safe place in which to make a life for themselves and their children.

Australians have been leaders in establishing International laws to protect human rights because these reflect our values as a community – now is the time to renew our commitment to these principles and values.



For more related information, please visit:

<http://unhcr.org.au>



# Join Us

Are you seeking a rewarding experience with a not-for-profit organisation working towards a meaningful cause? Are you interested in the important work of the United Nations? Doing voluntary work can be a rewarding experience and also a great opportunity to meet like-minded individuals from all cultures and professions. UNAA WA works to promote the ideals of the United Nations through providing education and awareness on localised topics of interest. We are always interested in working with individuals and organisations on pertinent issues.

You are welcome to call our office and discuss when you can visit us. You can also find more information at: [www.unaa-wa.org.au](http://www.unaa-wa.org.au) and also join as a member .

## World Oceans Day

On World Oceans Day, UNEP Launches Guide to Ecosystem-based Management Nairobi, 8 June 2011 - Declines in marine and coastal ecosystems due to human activities such as overfishing and pollution could be reversed if organisations, communities and other stakeholders adopt a more integrated approach to managing coastal environments. Closer partnerships between different marine users - such as fishing communities, the tourism industry and conservationists - can also help coastal communities become better prepared for natural disasters and the impacts of global warming, such ocean acidification and changes in sea levels.

Caroline Pembroke– UNAA WA

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### 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](http://www.smartbrief.com/un_wire/index.jsp) Read more about the Millennium project: [www.unmillenniumproject.org](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org)

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