



**United Nations Association of Australia WA Division**

# UN Matters

June 2014

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Carolynne Gatward

Book your table now for our Quiz Night on **Tuesday 29 July (7pm)** at the Irish Club. Our event marks the UN International Day of Friendship, so bring your friends along and enjoy a fun night. See details page 3. The bar will be available and meals can be purchased from 5.30pm - 8pm. Ring Mags on 0421 796 999 if you have any queries or would like to buy single tickets.

Members and non-members are invited to meet our Executive in a relaxed and informal setting on **Tuesday 22 July** from 6.30pm at the Office. Light refreshments will be provided. This will be an opportunity to find out more about what projects and events we are working on, to make compliments, suggestions or constructive criticisms and to see how you could participate. In addition to the activities of the Executive, we have subgroups such as Education, Human Rights, the Environment, the Young Professionals and in addition, a new Women's Committee is being established. It's a great time to become active in the Association.

As our AGM is fast approaching, it's also the ideal chance to have any questions answered if you are thinking of nominating for an Executive position. Our AGM will be held at the Office on **Sunday 17 August** at 2pm with light refreshments from 1.30pm. Please come along, hear our guest speaker and show your support for our Executive for their dedicated contribution.

The influence of the UN continues to touch us in various ways—this month, UNESCO rejected a bid from the Federal Government to delist over 70 000 hectares of Tasmanian world heritage area forest. UNESCO has also expressed concern at the Government's decision to approve a coal terminal expansion near the Great Barrier Reef. They have deferred a decision on whether to list the world heritage listed reef as being 'in danger' until 2015.

On World Refugee Day, the UNHCR reported that over 50 million people are either refugees, asylum seekers or internally displaced, the highest number since World War 2. The High Commissioner, Antonio Guterres, has observed that 86% of refugees live in developing countries. He has stated that it is 'high time' for the international community to show these developing countries 'a much stronger solidarity and an attitude of true burden-sharing'. We also need to greatly improve our capacity to resolve the conflict situations arising around the world.

A reminder that 18 July is Nelson Mandela International Day. On this day, you are asked to find time (67 minutes) to help someone or the community. It can be as simple as reading to or tutoring people in need, doing something for the environment or abandoned animals or donating unwanted goods. As Nelson Mandela said '*It is in your hands to make a difference...*'.



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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Excerpt from Kay Hallahan's speech at "Safeguarding for Seniors"
- Yolande Frank Memorial Award Submissions closing end of July
- Quiz Night —Be quick and get your tickets soon!

## LAURA JOHN - AUSTRALIAN UN YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE IN PERTH



*Laura John with UNAAWA Young Professionals at Venn in Perth*

*‘Your story is quite inspirational and has made us even more passionate about making a change in our community’*

UN Youth WA hosted Laura John, the Australian UN Youth Representative, this month for a six-day visit to Western Australia. She spent a couple of days in regional Bunbury before coming to Perth for the rest of the week.

A quick look at her official Facebook page reveals how important her visit with young people across Australia has been. ‘Your story is quite inspirational,’ writes one Facebook follower, ‘and has made us even more passionate about making a change in our community’ (<https://www.facebook.com/UNYouthRep>).

Laura mingled with members of the UNAAWA Young Professionals at an intimate gathering at Venn Bar in the city. Laura’s passion and enthusiasm for her work with youth around the country was contagious. She reflected on her visit with young people in WA and confidently spoke of their self-

proclaimed need and desire for support on mental health issues (among other things). Interestingly these young people, according to Laura, want mentors and role models they can still relate to. While this is not an ‘official’ statement, it was interesting to learn of one small area of Laura’s work as the Australian UN Youth Representative.

Laura’s visits around Australia offer an exciting opportunity for us as a broader community to understand what our youth want and need to better themselves and the community. And if Laura is anything to go by, the future is bright.

To keep up-to-date with Laura’s important work, visit <http://youthrep.org.au/about>.

[Colleen Harmer, Executive Member]



United Nations Association of Australia



# QUIZ NIGHT

## > CELEBRATING THE UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FRIENDSHIP

WHERE: Irish Club of WA, 61 Townshend Rd, Subiaco.

DATE: 7pm for 7.30pm start, Tuesday 29 July 2014.

COST: Tables of 8 @ \$160 ( \$20 pp) pre-booked.

Meals & bar available. There will be a raffle and door prize.

BOOKINGS: Book tables via TRYBOOKING at <http://www.trybooking.com/FHLF>

For more information, contact Mags on 0421 796 999 or [projects.unaawa@gmail.com](mailto:projects.unaawa@gmail.com)

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: **UNAAWA** [www.unaa-wa.org.au](http://www.unaa-wa.org.au)

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UN Photo/ Albert González Farran



For more information on the UNAA, please visit: [www.unaa.org.au](http://www.unaa.org.au)

## WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

### Excerpt from Welcome Speech

by Kay Hallahan -

“Safeguarding for Seniors” Forum



I'm privileged to be here today as a representative of the United Nations Association of Australia WA Division. The United Nations has designated 15<sup>th</sup> of June in each year as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and given that we are meeting before that date, I'm not in a position to relay the 2014 message from the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. However his message for 2013 still seems to be relevant to us today. These were his words in June last year:

*Around the world, older persons are tragically subject to psychological, financial or physical abuse. Unfortunately, too many older persons can be at risk. Prejudicial attitudes contribute to the problem. Today, let us re-examine our attitudes towards ageing and the status and role of older persons.*

*I urge Governments, civil society, and communities to raise awareness about this challenge. Governments, in particular, can help by enacting legislation to protect the abused and prosecute the abuser. We owe it to older persons and societies at large to fight ageism in all its forms and enhance the dignity and human rights of older persons everywhere.*

I guess we would all agree with the spirit of that statement and it will be interesting to see the focus of his words for 2014, in the next few days.

Many of you will be aware that the Western Australian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (WANPEA) was formed in 1999 to encourage collaboration across government and non-government agencies within the health and welfare sectors. Advocare, an independent advocacy agency for older people, was funded in 2001 to provide information and assistance to people experiencing elder abuse, as well as referral and community education about the prevention, detection and management of elder abuse. Advocare provides a Statewide service.

The Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse: Western Australia (APEA: WA) was established in 2005 to promote a whole-of-government policy framework that values and supports the rights of older people. APEA: WA is a high-level policy group with members working collaboratively to raise awareness of elder abuse issues and to influence current attitudes, policies and practices in relation to elder abuse. The Older Peoples Rights Service is a specialist legal service that offers legal assistance and social work to those experiencing or at risk of Elder Abuse. I understand this is managed in partnership between Advocare and the Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre, and funded by the Department for Local Government and Communities.

It was heartening to hear the Minister for Local Government and Communities recently announce an important initiative to establish an Elder Abuse Helpline which will for the first time provide a One Stop Shop for information on the most appropriate service for any of us who may be confronted with knowledge or concern that abuse of an elderly person is taking place.

I understand that the service will be operational in the very near future.

Advice on the most appropriate service to contact will be readily available. The website of the Office of the Public Advocate is a resource which provides good information on Enduring Power of Guardianship. This is important information that we should all know.

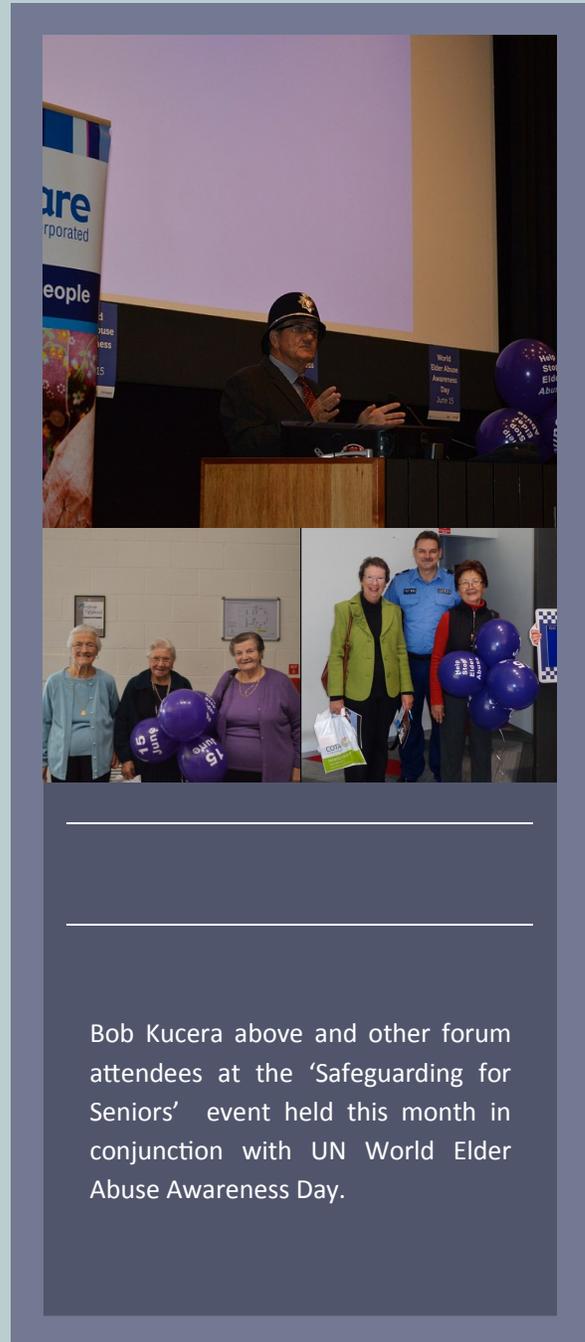
Each and every one of us can appoint our selected Guardian to act on our behalf should the need arise in the future. The Advance Health Directive which is a separate document allows us to specify our treatment decisions for the future and the Enduring Power of Attorney allows us to appoint an Attorney to make financial and property decisions on our behalf in the future should we not have the capacity to do so. So while we are able, these are matters we should attend to as a way of ensuring that we do not feature in future statistics of Elder Abuse.

In my various careers I've been a police constable, a social worker, a Member of the State Parliament and as a Minister held the Seniors portfolio. One or two people have said Kay don't forget to mention that you introduced the Seniors Card, so in the unlikely event that anyone asks you if I did mention it you can truthfully say 'yes she did!'

There is no doubt that we live in ever changing times where larger families are the exception rather than the norm and that in the nuclear family the ongoing care and support for family members with significant needs can become quite a burden where it falls on too few individuals - which is another reason why today's forum is so important. We all need to know where to go to find the resources needed from time to time.

In closing my comments I wish to commend Advocate, the City of Melville and COTA WA for their concern and commitment in providing this important opportunity to canvass the issues requir-

ing our attention in order to Safeguard Our Seniors - and indeed to safeguard ourselves and hopefully to reduce the number of people into the future who would otherwise be subjected to Elder Abuse.



## OWEN LONERAGAN'S NEW BOOK

We would like to congratulate long-standing member Owen Loneragan on the publication of his book *Sustainable Planet Destiny: Biosphere Care and Social Equity*.

In the book, Owen highlights the need to become vigilant of both the social and environmental implications of our current attitudes towards our treatment of humanity and nature. Our inability to realize our human limitations, he argues, has afforded terrible mistakes to our natural environment.

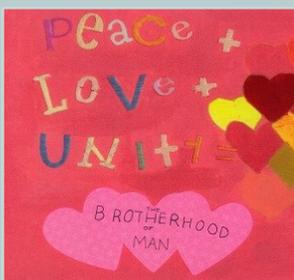
Owen has endured a steadfast commitment to the issues of social equity and the environment for many years. He has been an Organisational Member of the UNAAWA for 42 years representing the Esperanto League of WA. He was President of the UNAAWA from 1982-1985, became a Life Member in 1991, and won the UNAA Peace Award in 1996.

Owen maintains an enduring commitment to the RSL Code of Citizenship which, he says, has inspired him to continue his decades-long commitment to the UNAAWA. This commitment, coupled with his reverence of the resilience of Holocaust survivors inspired him to write his book.

[Colleen Harmer, Executive Member]

## UNAAWA MARKETPLACE

UNAAWA has a number of items available for purchase from our office in Subiaco. From shirts, to postcards, to books there is something for everyone to show their support for the UN, its mission and the local WA network. Contact Harvey via the website or ring the Office for more details on how to purchase.

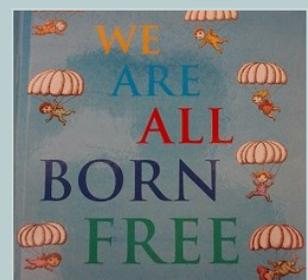


Yolande Frank Award  
Postcards \$1 each or  
3 for \$4

Postcards feature the artwork of the Yolande Frank Memorial Award winner. (See our website for more designs)



UNAAWA Shirts  
(Women) \$10



Books:

*We Are All Born Free*  
\$15

*Celebrating Diversity  
in Western Australia*  
(cookbook) \$10

*Voice for Peace* \$5

## ENVIRONMENTAL REFUGEES



Photo from [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)

Whilst many of us are familiar with some of the potential adverse effects of climate change, one of the lesser-explored implications is the displacement of people and subsequent “environmental refugees”. Displacement of people due to climate change events can result from rising sea levels and other extreme weather events. Displacement can also be caused by other less sudden and indirect consequences of climate change such as long-term weather trends, which render land unsuitable for integral practices such as agriculture.

Whilst there are many different terms for “environmental refugees”, currently there is no international definition. The Environmental Justice Foundation claims that there are inadequate international laws to protect people who are displaced due to climate change events. This is concerning given that the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre reports that there were more than 42 million people displaced in Asia and the Pacific from 2010-2011 due to storms, floods and heat and cold waves (Wikipedia 2014).

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Programme report indicates that the 52 countries, comprising of 62 million people emit less than 1% of the world’s greenhouse gases, yet will suffer most

from extreme weather caused by climate change (UNEP 2014). Some experts have even claimed that globally we could see up to 120 million refugees from rising sea levels alone (UNHCR 2001).

Although the issue of environmental refugees is likely to be an increasingly pertinent issue, particularly because there is no current legal provision for states to provide asylum for “environmental refugees”, the good news is that UNEP believe with respect to SIDS we have the necessary tools to head off future development setbacks from climate change events. UNEP believe we can successful transition SIDS to an inclusive green economy and take advantage of renewable energy and the sustainable exploration of unexploited resources - eventually leading the world in the development of indicators that are not just based on GDP but that also include natural resources.

Further discussions regarding these matters are also bound to arise in the United Nations Climate Summit, which will be held in New York in September.

[Karissa Wilson, Executive Member]

### References:

- Wikipedia 2014 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental\\_migrant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_migrant)
- UNEP 2014 <http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit2014/>
- UNHRC <http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit2014/>

## UNAAWA ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Yolande Frank Competition – get creative!

Entries into the Yolande Frank Art prize will be closing on 31 July. Children aged 9-14 are encouraged to embrace their own creative expression of the Declaration of Human Rights. So if you have students, kids, grandkids, nieces and/or nephews help them to understand and artistically communicate that ‘Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay’ (Article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). For details, visit <http://www.unaa-wa.org.au/modx/art.html>.

### UNAA Conference, Sydney 25-27 July

The Conference ‘To End All Wars’ will be held on 25-26 July at Customs House. Check out the program at [http://www.unaa.org.au/Conference\\_flyer\\_250314.pdf](http://www.unaa.org.au/Conference_flyer_250314.pdf). The National AGM will follow on Sunday 27 July. There are three scholarships for fulltime students to attend the Conference and cocktail reception (flights excluded). See <http://www.unaa.org.au/win-a-scholarship-to-attend-the-2014-unaa-conference.html> for details. Applying is easy, but be quick as the deadline is 7 July.

## NEWS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

### East Timor’s First Feature Film

On Thursday 31 July at 6.30pm, there will be a Q&A and screening of ‘Beatriz’s War’ at Cinema Paradiso with the film’s co-director Luigi Acquisto and producers Stella Zammataro and Lurdes Pires. East Timor’s award winning first feature film, Beatriz’s War is the haunting, passionate story of one woman’s conviction to remain true to the man she loves and the country for which she fought. It is a bold reworking of the 16<sup>th</sup> century French ‘Martin Guerre’ story. In this adaptation, the original story is transposed to Portuguese Timor during the Indonesian occupation of the small colony. Beatriz’s young husband disappears during a brutal massacre by occupying Indonesian forces, sixteen years later she is troubled by his return; is this mysterious stranger her husband or an impostor? Tickets on sale online from [https://lunapalace.com.au/index.php?cin=online&choice=select\\_fest&id=133](https://lunapalace.com.au/index.php?cin=online&choice=select_fest&id=133).

### Australian Academy of Law Lecture - Hon Michael Kirby

On Monday 28 July, the Hon Michael Kirby AC CMG will be presenting a public lecture on ‘North Korea, International Law and Political Reality’. The venue will be the Government House Ballroom, St Georges Terrace Perth. Admission is free but numbers are limited so you must confirm attendance no later than 22 July via the Academy’s website at <http://www.academyoflaw.org.au/events?id=28>.

## UN IMPORTANT DATES

### JULY 2014

5 July	<u>International Day of Cooperatives</u>
11 July	<u>World Population Day</u>
18 July	<u>Nelson Mandela International Day</u>
28 July	<u>World Hepatitis Day [WHO]</u>
30 July	<u>International Day of Friendship</u>



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