

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION *of the United States of America*

Fall/Winter 2010



ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER of the SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DIVISION

P.O. Box 16067 Irvine, CA 92625-6067 (714) 538-5689 email: info@una-oc.org website: www.una-oc.org

ANNUAL CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH PLANNED FOR JAN 23, 2011



Our annual champagne brunch and silent auction is always a highlight of the year for the chapter, and this year we hope you will plan to come—and bring a friend or two.

The keynote speaker this year will be **Dr. Tim Canova**, Professor of Law at Chapman University. He has chosen to speak on *“Lawless Finance, Failing States, and the Unfinished Agenda of the United Nations.”*

The **Hacienda Restaurant**, at 1725 College Avenue in Santa Ana, is a lovely location. The buffet is always spectacular and offers something for every palate.

A silent auction raises funds for chapter activities. It’s always fun to see the array of items donated by

members. **If you have something to donate** to the silent auction this year, please leave a message, with your phone number, at (714) 538-5689 and we will arrange for someone to pick it up at your convenience. Thanks in advance for helping the chapter in this way.

Reserve your place at the annual brunch now, using the reservation form on p. 6 of this newsletter and the enclosed envelope—and please do bring family and friends! Remember that non-members are always welcome at our annual brunch.



FIRST ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL A SUCCESS

by Kelsey Pennington



UNA-OC held its first annual **Human Rights Film Festival** on Sunday, October 24 to rally support and raise funds for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The films, screened at the **Folino Theatre at Chapman University**, focused on the lives of children around the world. The event was co-sponsored by **Dodge College of Film and Media Studies** as well as the Chapman University chapter of the advocacy group focused on ending the use of children as soldiers, *Invisible Children*. The day began with short UNICEF animations designed to inform audiences about the rights of children worldwide. *(continued on p. 5)*

Interns Angela Koussian, Chanel Rivest, Julia Erratt, Nicole Tellier model new UNA t-shirts on sale at the film festival

New intern for 2010-2011: Casey Webb

Casey is majoring in International Relations at the University of LaVerne. She joined UNA-OC as a volunteer intern last spring, and served on the film festival selection committee during the summer. Since becoming a UNA intern, Casey has attended every Board meeting and special event, including the meet-and-greet at Borders bookstore in July, the coffee talk in September, and the film festival. In 2011, she will be working on NGO Relations with new Board member Joy Adams.

Casey already has an impressive history of volunteer work and community service, giving her time to a thrift store that supports a homeless shelter in Placentia, and to St. Jude Hospital in Fullerton.



NEWS FROM THE UNITED NATIONS...



In September, U.N. Secretary-General **Ban Ki-Moon** appointed former president of Chile **Michelle Bachelet** to head a new U.N. agency charged with promoting gender equality around the globe. This is terrific news, but Bachelet has her work cut out for her: women are still considered property, without rights, and treated in degrading ways in many parts of the world.

The Montreal Protocol of 1987, designed to protect the ozone layer of the earth's atmosphere, may hold the key to success at the Cancun conference on climate change. Rather than crafting an entirely new treaty, the nations that signed the Montreal document could agree to expand its authority to include phasing out the production and use of hydrofluorocarbons, chemicals used in refrigeration and cooling systems. By the time you read this newsletter, the Cancun conference will have ended; we'll know by then if the nations came together on this issue, or if politics as usual prevailed.

The wheels of justice are turning...keep your eyes on:

- the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague, where former VP of Congo Jean-Pierre Bemba is now on trial for crimes against humanity and war crimes; and
- Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where the second phase of the Khmer Rouge tribunals will begin in 2011.

It seems that one terrible disaster after another happened in 2010, and many people felt the effects of crisis overload or, as Helen Caldicott called it, "psychic numbing." Earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, flooding in China and Pakistan, the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the ongoing war in Afghanistan...so many claims on our attention, so many needs for help of all kinds. There is a real temptation to turn away from the next bad news. People of conscience need to resist that temptation, need to stay alert and aware, and give what they can to the causes of their choice. No one can get involved in everything that is worth doing, but everyone should get involved in *something* that is worth doing.

DID YOU KNOW...?



In addition to its well-known list of World Heritage sites such as the city of Dubrovnik, the Taj Mahal, Machu Picchu, and Angkor Wat, in 2008 UNESCO began to compile a list of "intangible heritages"—cultural practices which, for one reason or another, are in danger of being lost. These include many national dance forms; ancient and traditional customs and practices; folk arts and crafts; and much more. See www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011 for the complete list.

REPORTER AT LARGE...*Nicole Tellier*



In early October, the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice at San Diego State University hosted an international working conference on U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325. Adopted unanimously in 2000, Res 1325 calls for the adoption of gender perspectives and special attention to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict reconstruction. It was the first formal and international legal document to pay attention to the experiences of women in armed conflict—as both victims and as post-conflict actors. It requires parties involved in a conflict to respect women's rights and encourage their participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction.

At this conference, women from around the world came together to discuss the history of the absence of women from the public sphere, and the ways in which we can change cultural and social assumptions so that the inclusion of women is not the exception but the rule.

The conference also addressed the issue of a tracking implementation system. Currently, the involvement of women is tracked only informally by various organizations. For example, UNIFEM statistics show that less than 8% of peace-building teams are women; fewer than 2% are signatories on peace agreements; and less than 3% of national budgets provide for women's needs.

Specifically defined indicators, with achievable targets, must be implemented to track activity, progress, and output in a comprehensive manner. In this way, the goals of Res 1325 may be achieved. This will require, however, not only a change in institutional thinking, but action-oriented responses by member nations. For instance, economic and symbolic reparations are essential for both restorative and transitional justice. It was felt by conference participants that if we cannot adequately record success, we run the risk of rewarding failure.

In lectures, panels, and working sessions, the conference addressed numerous gender-related issues. Highlights were the stories of the women's movement for peace in Liberia; the advancement of women's political representation in Northern Ireland; and the inclusion of women in the police force of Somalia. Other topics included the necessity of disarmament, the role of women as peacekeepers, the needs of displaced women and women oppressed under conservative religious regimes, and the absence of men at the forefront of women's rights issues. To paraphrase one panelist, *Women will not allow for the abortion of their basic human rights. It is up to us to make sure that women's equality becomes a reality, not just words on paper.*

Are you on our list--?

If you do not currently receive our Constant Contact e-mail reminders of upcoming UNA events, send an e-mail to tye@chapman.edu, and you will be added to the list. We promise not to bombard you with UNA messages, but members are finding that these occasional notes in the in-box can be useful.

Visit us on



Officer Nominations for 2011

President	Geraldine McNenny
V/P Programs	Gaye Christoffersen
V/P Membership	Opal Richardson
Treasurer	Carl Mariz
Secretary	Virginia Bernal

Please join or renew today, by mailing a check to UNA-OC, P.O. Box 16067, Irvine, CA 92623-6067. Annual dues are \$10 Student, \$25 Introductory, \$40 regular individual/family, and \$100 Sponsor. Tax-free donations are also welcome! Indicate on your check whether it is for membership or a donation. You can also go to <http://www.unausa.org> to join or renew online also.

Film Festival Highlights (continued from p. 1)



Following a welcome by UNA/USA-OC chapter President **Gerri McNenny** (pictured here with director, **Kent Bassett**), the festival began with “Kavi,” directed by **Greg Helvey**. About a young

Indian boy and his parents who live and work at a brick-making factory under terrible conditions, the film ends on a hopeful note, though there is little hope for most modern-day child slaves.

“**La Guerrera**,” directed by **Erika Cohn**, is about a young Mexican girl who loves playing soccer, but whose mother tries to push her towards a more traditional life. Her father, unexpectedly, encourages her and gives her his old cleats so she can practice as much as she wants to. Eventually the boys do accept her on the practice team, though many women never get the chance to prove their self-worth in societies dominated by men.

Human trafficking was the subject of “**Our Joy, Our Life**,” one of two documentaries shown. In just 4 years, half a million people were trafficked in Cameroon, most being young children and teens who were promised an education if they willingly went with people who then forced them into various forms of slavery. GLOWA (Global Welfare Associates) is an organization that removes trafficking victims from the situations in which they are trapped.

The co-directors of this film, **Ruthie Rubietta** and **Taylor O’Sullivan**, were available after the screening for a Q&A session in which they described the way that a Chapman University documentary scholarship enabled them to go to Africa to film last summer; and the ways in which the trip affected their lives.

“**The Line**” focuses on the lives of two pairs of fathers and sons on the US/Mexico border. Director **Kent Bassett** told the audience that he had spent months in border states doing research and finding real people who live the lives displayed in the film. He understands what a sensitive subject it is, which is why he chose to display it in a way that shows the problems on both sides.

Intern/event photographer: Julia Erratt

The afternoon continued with a film about a young Afghan boy who has a healing touch. “**Heal**” focuses on the way that war and destruction can affect children. After the film the director, **Mian Adnan Ahmad**, discussed the theme: that deep wounds need time to heal.

UNA/USA So.CA Division President, **Mel Boynton** (pictured here between OC Chapter treasurer, **Carl Mariz**, and OC past president, **Barbara Tye**), came to celebrate UN Day with us.



The main feature of the afternoon was “**Children of War**,” directed by **Bryan Single**. The film had its official premiere at the United Nations on October 12, and UNA-OC was the first U.S. organization to screen it after its premiere. It took 3 years to film this documentary, which follows the lives of three former child soldiers in the Lord’s Resistance Army in Uganda.

The themes of the film include guilt, forgiveness, and resurrection. The rehabilitation center shown in the film is home to 2,553 children who go through counseling, education, and health management programs to get them accustomed to living a normal life once again. Since some of them were in the army for over half their lives, it is a struggle to bring each child back to the side of hope and forgiveness. One child discussed the process by saying, “**I know my spirit is free, but living free takes practice.**”

After the feature presentation there was time for audience comments and conversations, during which a variety of opinions were expressed about each film. The audience members were unanimously moved by the last film, though each person who spoke seemed to take away something different from it. The emphasis on education in



most of the films was noted by several audience members, and it was mentioned that so often we take our advantages and rights for granted.

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Change Order Requested

Make 2011 the year you get more involved!

Pick something that fits your time and talents:

- Help staff a UNA table at community events
- Offer office and/or newsletter or mailing help
- Check out our website: www.una-oc.org –click on links and keep up with UN activities
- Share your newsletter with friends & family
- Attend our occasional speakers series
- Join or renew & spread the word www.una-oc.org
- Check us out on Facebook 



Happy Holidays



from the UNA-USA Orange County Chapter Board

Hope to see you January 23rd at our Annual Meeting/Champagne Brunch

Please Reserve _____ seats @\$30.00 ea

Regrets, but please accept my donation of \$_____

Name(s): _____

email or phone contact: _____

Please complete, add your check, and send to:

UNA-USA/OC, P.O. Box 16067, Irvine CA 92623-6067

**Thank you to all who have joined or renewed your membership recently! **