

# UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION *of the United States of America*

Spring 2011



ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER  
of the SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DIVISION

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

## ANNUAL CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH ENJOYED BY ALL



*Classical guitarists play from the balcony*



*Member Ann Nguyen and intern Nicole Tellier*

Members and friends of the Orange County chapter of UNA-USA gathered on January 23 for the annual champagne brunch fundraiser at the Hacienda Restaurant in Santa Ana. Once again, event organizer and chapter member Joyce McFadden orchestrated a lovely afternoon. In addition to a successful silent auction that raised funds for 2011 chapter activities, the membership voted to endorse the Board's slate of officers for the coming year: Gerri McNenny, president; Opal Richardson, VP for Membership; Carl Mariz, Treasurer; and Virginia Bernal, Secretary. They were then sworn in by past president Suzanne Darweesh. The position of VP for Programs remained open, awaiting a volunteer from among the active chapter members. Since then, Lavon Mariz has agreed to serve in this capacity for the coming year.

Following the buffet lunch, chapter president Gerri McNenny welcomed the attendees, noting, in particular, two guests from the Sisters of St. Joseph community in Orange—SSJ supports the chapter by providing office space and a room for its monthly Board meetings. She then summarized the many chapter activities of 2010, and encouraged everyone to become more involved in 2011.



*Officers for 2011 are sworn in*

Following a musical interlude provided by Chapman University musicians Adam Borecki and Kira Roden, a challenging keynote address on "***Lawless Finance, Failing States, and the Unfinished Agenda of the United Nations***" was given by Chapman University law professor Tim Canova.

As always, student interns were involved in helping Joyce McFadden with the many advance tasks that are necessary if such an event is to come off looking classy and effortless. This year, UNA interns Nicole Tellier (Chapman) and Casey Webb (U. LaVerne) provided assistance with the silent auction arrangements and also did the event photography.

## Message from the President

by Gerri McNenny

Happy spring to all of our UNA USA Orange County members and friends! The coming months promise to be full of activity, with our chapter hosting a table at the Great American Write-In on various UN issues on April 9 and at the Soka International Fair on May 7, as well as support for a 5k walk to end hunger and child obesity on April 17 (see pp. 3-4). The UNA USA Orange County chapter continues to thrive as a grassroots organization, supporting the vital work of the UN. In 2011, the Orange County Chapter will join with other chapters in sup-

porting the [UNA's advocacy agenda for 2011](#) as it focuses on four core issue areas: securing US-UN funding; advancing human rights through the UN; encouraging US ratification of international treaties; and [supporting the realization of the Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#). Members are invited to come to our board meetings, held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month, and to contribute your suggestions and volunteer efforts. Just email us at [info@una-oc.org](mailto:info@una-oc.org). We welcome everyone's comments and contributions.

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## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

*An advocacy column by Cambria Findley-Grubb*

The United Nations has long been under attack by Washington's conservative politicians and lobbyists. However, with the challenge to solve the current budget deficit a new bill has been introduced that would threaten the survival of the U.N. as well as the reputation of the United States abroad. This bill, The United Nations Transparency, Accountability, and Reform Act (H.R. 557), seeks to shift the United Nations funding base from an *assessed* to a *voluntary basis*<sup>1</sup>. The main sponsor of this bill is the new Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL). It is co-sponsored by 100 House members, including all incoming Republican members of the House leadership<sup>2</sup>. The group taking the largest hit under this new bill will be the Human Rights Council. Ros-Lehtinen was quoted in "The Hill" saying that the Human Rights Council was a "waste of taxpayer dollars," and she'd "like to make sure that we once and for all kill all U.S. funding for that beast."<sup>3</sup>

This bill is an egregious attack on an issue tremendously important to the American people: human rights. The United States funds 22% of the United Nations' regular budget, and 27% of its Peacekeeping budget.<sup>4</sup> If funding is moved to a *voluntary* as opposed to an *assessed basis*, there is no telling the magnitude of the damage that will be done to both the international community and the perception of the legitimacy of the United States policies on the global stage. With less money for issues such as Peacekeeping, particularly under the Human Rights Council, the amount of human rights violations may exponentially increase due to the lack of funds for intervention methods from a slashed budget. In her hearing titled "The United Nations: Urgent Problems that Need Congressional Action," Ros-Lehtinen cites lack of American support for the UN and the protection of America's interests as her reason for introducing the bill to slash UN funding<sup>5</sup>. However in 2010, a survey found that 72% of Americans support paying peacekeeping dues in full to the UN<sup>6</sup>. HR 557 will soon be debated on the House floor. However, the Constitution stipulates that spending bills must be approved by both houses and HR 557 will likely face opposition in the Democratic-controlled Senate.

We ask that you inform your representatives of your opposition to this bill, and keep a watch on this hot debate occurring in the capital.

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<sup>1</sup> "The United Nations Transparency, Accountability, and Reform Act" (H.R. 557) Library of Congress

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Association Advocacy Website

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, Bridget. "The World from The Hill: U.N. funding an early target for House Republican." Hill 23 Jan 2011: Web. 5 Mar 2011.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Website

<sup>5</sup> Johnson, Bridget. "The World from The Hill: U.N. funding an early target for House Republican." Hill 23 Jan 2011: Web. 5 Mar 2011.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Association Advocacy Website

## 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. The new organization, formally known as the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women but informally called UN Women, was launched on February 24.

Four former UN agencies dedicated to improving the lives of women, including UNIFEM, have been folded into the new organization. This consolidation was the outcome of years of planning, and Secretary-General Ban expressed his belief that it will give UN Women a more powerful voice within the United Nations.

Ms. Bachelet pointed out at the celebration that UN Women was voted into existence unanimously by the 192 member nations, following years of effort by a wide array of women's rights organizations and activists. Even so, its funding remains alarmingly low—too low, many feel, for it to engage in the grassroots work needed if genuine progress towards gender equality and ending violence towards women is to be made.

### **New intern for 2011: Cambria Findley-Grubb**

A graduate of Valencia High School in Yorba Linda, Cambria is currently a Political Science/Peace Studies major at Chapman University. Later this semester she's headed to New York, where she and the Chapman MUN team are representing the country of Jordan—what an interesting time to be representing a Middle Eastern country at the national MUN!

Cambria's resume includes work as a mock trial coach, a teacher of public speaking, a poll worker for the 2008 election, and in a variety of leadership roles for the Disciples of Christ Church. She also has served as a volunteer for Chapman's Holocaust Lecture Series, and within the past two years she founded "Soaps and Dreams," a local organization that provides new pajamas and toiletries for at-risk children, and "Together We Can," a local food bank.

Following graduation, Cambria plans to earn a law

degree with a specialization in Alternative Dispute Resolution and Advocacy. Partly for that reason, Cambria is doing a UNA internship this spring and has



chosen to focus on Advocacy. In the fall she will be doing Chapman's Washington Semester; we hope that she will rejoin the chapter when she returns.

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## **PLANNING AHEAD – PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR!**

### **Great American Write-In to be April 9**



UNA-OC will have a table at the **Great American Write-In** again this year—come to the **Lakeview Senior Center in Woodbridge Community Park in Irvine between 9:30-1:00** and stop by our table to chat about UN issues and the current projects of our chapter. We will have your congressperson's local office address, and of course there will be tables nearby where you can sit and write a note—which we will mail for you—about your UN-related concerns.

### **5-K walk to end hunger and child obesity on April 17**

UNA-USA Orange County Chapter is joining with a new OC nonprofit organization, FANA, to co-sponsor a beach walk demonstrating support for action to end world hunger and (it may seem counter-intuitive, but there *is* a connection) childhood obesity. Join the parents and students of Oak View Elementary School, UNA members, and other supporters at

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Orange County Chapter  
P.O. Box 16067  
Irvine, CA 92623-6067  
714/638-5689

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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](http://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
- Check us out on Facebook 

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8:00 a.m. on the beach across from the Hyatt Regency in Huntington Beach. Get some good exercise, enjoy the company of others, and support this worthy cause. \$25 advance registration: log on to [www.fanaglobal.org](http://www.fanaglobal.org)

### Family fun at Soka University on May 7

Stop by the UNA-OC table at the 10<sup>th</sup> annual International Fair to buy a UNA pin or t-shirt, a small country flag, or just to chat. Between 10:30 and 5:30, over 700 musicians and dancers will be performing on three stages and 150 nonprofit and craft exhibitors will give you plenty to see, do, and think about. This event is part of the OC Imagination Celebration and draws a festive crowd to one of OC's loveliest campuses. Admission is free, but parking is \$10 (cash—no credit cards).

***Please carpool if you possibly can. Thomas Guide: Page 951, Grid D2 .***

### 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](mailto: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.

#### Officers for 2011

President	Gerri McNenny
V/P Programs	Lavon Mariz
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, or go online to: [www.unausa.org/membership](http://www.unausa.org/membership)***

***Be sure to specify that you are joining the Orange County, CA chapter.***

***Annual dues are \$25 Introductory, \$40 regular individual/family, \$10 Student, and \$100 Sponsor.***