

# Rochester International Association

*Spring/Summer 2008 Newsletter Edition*

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Spring/Summer 2008

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## World Festival Wrapup

by Herta Matteson

Dear World Festival Friends,

You will certainly agree that our 33rd World Festival “One World – Many Cultures” was a wonderful event and a great success. A big thank you to everybody involved!

The World Festival is the best opportunity for our international community to share its diverse heritage with everybody. We can show our traditions, food, cultural richness and make ourselves be known as neighbors, friends and contributors to the wonderful fabric of Rochester. But we not only extended our hand to the “majority”, we also had great fun networking among each other.

We had unprecedented support for the World Festival from the local media and could reach many people, who otherwise would not have ever come to an event like this. When I was sitting in the gym watching some performances, I heard many comments like “I never knew there was such a thing” or “I have never seen anything like it” or “this is amazing for Rochester” and others. That means we did our job well of educating in a fun way and reaching out. We had great cultural displays and the food as always was one of the highlights. Our Children’s Center was amazing and unbelievably busy. The Friday night show was a wonderful display of talent and a trip around the world in itself.

We changed many things this year that turned out to be quite positive: We invited vendors to sell ethnic items in the cafeteria, we had all the organizations in the lobby as people were coming in. We had Saturday performances. We condensed many things in the gym, which provided a

festive atmosphere and had the effect that the wonderful people with cultural displays were not isolated in the hallways. The Friday night “big show” offered family tickets this year, which was great and made it possible for large families to come.

It is always hard to single out people to thank individually in such a big communal effort (so please forgive me, that I can’t include everybody): John Berquist as the chair, Phyllis Layton as volunteer coordinator, Addie Borja with many many things, Margaret and Jim Favre for a wonderful children’s program, Glen Saponari for endless efforts and energy, Lee Herold for flags flags everywhere, Mary Glenski for varied jobs, Thomas Yung for leadership in technology and web to collaborate and inform, and the RIA board in general for this big effort. It was a total volunteer effort and commitment.

We cannot forget to thank our sponsors. It costs a lot of money to put on such an event. Without our sponsors we would have to charge entrance fees for the Saturday events, which would exclude many people.

We are certainly open to suggestions for future World Festivals. Please join us next year in organizing it. We start in September and invite everybody to participate in whatever way they can. Contact the RIA if you want to join us.

Thank you all for participating!

Herta Matteson  
RIA Vice President

# Announcements

In an effort to go green and postage savings, starting with the Fall/Autumn edition, we will **no longer be mailing hard copies** of our quarterly newsletters. Please send us your **email address** so that we may send you future editions of our newsletter in electronic form. Go to: <http://riamn.wufoo.com/forms/enewsletter-preferences/>

**If you currently only receive our newsletter in the mail, and we do not receive a reply, you will no longer receive mailings of our newsletter.** If you do not have an email address or a computer and still wish to receive a hard copy of our newsletter, please notify us in writing to our mailing address listed on the back of this newsletter.

**RCTC scholarships.** Phyllis Layton was pleased to present \$1000 RIA/Phyllis Layton scholarships April 24 to: Maria Calin, Vivian Munji, and Teerasak Punyawai.

**Retirement from the board.** Phyllis Layton will plan to leave the board at the Annual meeting in Sept 2008 when RIA elects new officers for the coming year. She may stay on as advisory board member.

**RIA Volunteer Coordinator Needed.** Please check out the United Way Volunteer connection listings for RIA at <http://tinyurl.com/55yzz9>

**Welcome new board member and RIA Secretary Steve Baumgartner.** Steve was voted as new RIA Secretary on March 2008. Steve works at Mayo Clinic in administration, and was a perfect choice for this position at RIA.

**Diversity Council News:** Check out their website at [diversitycouncil.org](http://diversitycouncil.org) for all their latest news and events.

# Upcoming Events

**RochesterFest Parade. June 27.** Any ethnic group, persons in ethnic dress and costumes and/or with flags representing their country are invited to participate. The distance to walk is about 2 miles, not very fast pace. As of this date we are not assured a vehicle, but this might change. It is a lot of fun to do it and you can watch yourself on TV later! Please contact [hmatteson@hotmail.com](mailto:hmatteson@hotmail.com)

(subject line Rochesterfest Parade), if you want to participate.

**Next year the City of Rochester will start a student exchange with Siheung City,** our partner city in Korea. This is a unique educational experience. No Korean language skills necessary. 5 girls and 5 boys, age about 16 will have the opportunity to stay with a Korean family for about 10 days, probably in June (definite dates are not confirmed). Korean students will visit Rochester. The idea is to make this exchange reciprocal as much as possible. The cost for the student is the flight (prices for next year not known). Room and board and sightseeing are free. Since the group will be very small, we will do it on a first come basis, with the ultimate decision by the Mayor's International Affairs Committee. Please e-mail Herta Matteson [hmatteson@hotmail.com](mailto:hmatteson@hotmail.com) or call at 280-8319 for more information and to get on the list. At this point no firm commitment is necessary.

**This June a group of Rochester students will visit our partner city Moosburg in Germany.** After Labor Day the German students will reciprocate with a visit to Rochester. If you are interested in hosting a teacher or a student, please e-mail [hmatteson@hotmail.com](mailto:hmatteson@hotmail.com) (German exchange in the subject line, please).

**RIA Summer Picnic. July 24.** The Annual International Picnic will be on Thursday, July 24, 6:30, at West Silver Lake Shelter. We have music and meet people from all over the world in a casual environment. Bring some food from your country to share! We will have some food and beverages. The event will be held rain or shine, because the shelter (next to the fire station) is large enough to accommodate everybody.

**Spanish Conversation.** Those wanting to speak Spanish are invited to come to "El Grupo". We meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7 pm at somebody's home and spend time chatting. No fees, no commitments, just a very diverse group of nice people conversing in Spanish. To get on the e-mail list to receive directions and information about the next meeting please send your request (in the subject line please "Spanish Conversation" or you will be deleted)to [hmatteson@hotmail.com](mailto:hmatteson@hotmail.com)

**English Conversation Group** welcomes newcomers to join them on the third Friday of each month at 10:00AM for snacks, coffee and conversation. We especially welcome those who wish to practice English as a second language. We meet in coffee houses or members homes. Call Betsy Munroe at 507-289-3359 or email at [betsym2296@aol.com](mailto:betsym2296@aol.com) for information about each monthly meeting.

**RIA Annual Board Meeting. September 9.** Held at the IMAA office on 2500 Valley High Drive NW. Meeting agenda will include elections for officers.

**International Speakers Luncheons at the Y** No luncheon meetings during the summer months. Next meeting will be Wed. Sept. 10th. Speakers are needed for next year's programs. Come and talk about your country or an international experience. Speakers can enjoy a free lunch prepared by Regal Catering. Call Betsy 289-3359 or Phyllis 288-1197 to volunteer.

**Community Events** Check out the Diversity Council's Multicultural Calendar at: [www.diversitycouncil.org](http://www.diversitycouncil.org)

**RIA Events Calendar online at:**  
<http://riamn.org/ria-events-calendar>

Other Non-RIA events you may be interested in:

**Camp Jornada Foundation's 8th Annual camp** session for kids with cancer in Stewartville. Aug 3rd, 2008. We are a foundation for kids with cancer. Theme this year is 'Around the World', kids that attend our camp will be able to learn about other cultures and their traditions, dance, food etc. Please feel free to contact Stacey Hildebrandt at 507-358-0958 or email at [jornadarocks@hotmail.com](mailto:jornadarocks@hotmail.com), website at [www.campjornada.org](http://www.campjornada.org)

## RIA Memberships

**Renewals and new memberships are needed.** Like most non-profit groups, RIA's fiscal year begins in July. We thank everyone who has mailed in their dues and hope to hear from others. Membership dues have not been raised since the organization was formed so that everyone can join, receive our newsletter and participate in our many

events. Membership information and registration form is on page 4 of this newsletter. Mail it to the new address of the IMAA. You may also join and pay dues at any RIA meeting or event. We welcome and need new members for the RIA board. Thank you for being a member of RIA!

## Technology Update

We will be redesigning and making it easier for you to find everything you ever wanted to know about the RIA. In addition, you'll be able to pay your dues and make donations online via PayPal or Google Checkout. Finally, you'll love the new interactive community-like feature for discovering "Your Country". Be on the lookout by the end of this summer for this new look to our website.

**Email subscriptions.** Please send us your e-mail address and get up-to-the-minute updates on any postings on our website.

<http://ria-minnesota.org/email-subscriptions/>

**Going Green.** If you wish to opt into only receiving your future newsletters via email, sign up at

<http://ria-minnesota.org/newsletters/>

**RIA events calendar are online.** Please bookmark this web address: <http://riamn.org/ria-events-calendar>

You may also subscribe via:   

If your group would like to add events to the calendar, please email us at [webmaster@ria-minnesota.org](mailto:webmaster@ria-minnesota.org)

## Credits

**President:** Addie Borja;

**Vice president:** Herta Matteson;

**Secretary:** Steve Baumgartner;

**Treasurer:** Ann Lance;

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Phyllis Layton;

**Memberships:** Thomas Yung;

**Website & Technology:** Thomas Yung;

**World Festival Coordinator:** John Berquist;

**Board Members:** Art Hambrun, George Margellos, Marcella Nixon, Heidi Chaney, Glen Saponari, Sushital Chowdhury, Larry Kinsey, Grace Verzosa

Mail this membership form to RIA's office at: **2500 Valley High Drive NW, Rochester, MN 55901.**

Phone Number: (507) 289-5960, Website: <http://ria-minnesota.org>

RIA board meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the board room.

**RIA membership is open to all. Please join today! RIA's mission:** Celebrating cultural diversity and providing opportunities for multicultural education and exchange. Membership is important and your way to help RIA put on the annual World Festival and other programs for international students and the community.

**Annual Membership dues:**

Individual \$20 [ ] Student/Senior \$15 [ ] Family \$30 (\$48 for 2 years) [ ] Organization \$30 [ ] Business \$50 [ ]

Name or Names:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

Email (*indicate if you'd like to receive future newsletters in your email instead of mailed out to you*):

\_\_\_\_\_

Country/Heritage:

\_\_\_\_\_

Interests/talents you can share:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Rochester International Association**

**Newsletter Spring/Summer 2008**

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