

Rochester International Association

Newsletter Summer 2007

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President's Letter

Reading the newsletter account of last April's 31st annual Rochester World Festival, I was again struck by the wonderful circle of people (some of them of My parent's generation) who year-after-year have somehow made that fun event happen, and by it's traditions of continuity which transcend the energies (and mortality) of most. If you're like me, you come away from each world festival with plentiful reminders of why "diversity" is so important to this wonderful country we call America; and perhaps a bit of amazement that there is so much of it (personified by such friendly, interesting, and talented people) right under our noses. In any case, it should be clear to all that few volunteer-staffed two-day gatherings of this magnitude--with complexities of planning and execution which would challenge even the most experienced international entertainment/travel agent--can be sustained over time without a constant influx of new folks willing to lend a hand, and ultimately to lead. As I look forward to September's annual meeting of the RIA Board--when, after six years of service as either faithful board member, vice-pres. or president of the organization, I relinquish my volunteer role as an elected officer -- I appeal to you longtime (or new!) supporters of the Rochester International Association to jump-in the circle and say "Yes--I can help too!"
—**Frank Hawthorne, RIA President.**

New Office

RIA moves to a new office location at 2500 Valley High Drive, NW, Rochester, MN 55901 All mail must now be sent to that address. The telephone number remains the same 289-5960, Ext. 116. Please leave a voicemail message.

World Festival 2007

Thanks to all who took part in the 31st annual Rochester World Festival at Mayo High School. The Rev. Nick Mezacapa, Master of Ceremonies, opened the International Talent show on Mayo's stage Friday evening introducing an exciting performance of South American Rhythms by the RCTC's World Drummers directed by Denny McGuire. Talented dancers, under the direction of April Dahl, performed Cuban salsa, a tour of India in beautiful costumes, dances of the Philippines and Middle Eastern dances by the Blue Lotus Dance Troupe. John Berquist, our new Festival coordinator from Minnesota's Iron Range, introduced fellow Nordic singers to join him in performing a variety of Nordic songs and music. Chinese Folk Song Players and a Swiss Alp Horn trio followed a brief intermission. Middle Eastern Dance performed by the Blue Lotus concluded the evening performance. Refreshments were enjoyed by the participants and the audience in Mayo's large foyer following the show.

On Saturday Mayo High provided a large spaces for cultural displays that were set up and staffed by individuals from many parts of the world as well as many community organizations, international clubs, Peace Corps, Peace makers, Human Rights Commission. In Mayo HS's big gymnasium, Marcela and Gary Nixon and their volunteers set up a great variety of activities from Japanese origami, piñatas, helium balloons, puppets, Norwegian hearts. Tissue paper flowers as well as a story tent with books for children that were provided by First Steps and the Jim and Judy Sloan Foundation. Wonderful ethnic foods were prepared and sold in Mayo's large cafeteria kitchen by cooks from Korea, Vietnam, India, Germany Philippines, Malaysia, Somalia, Sudan and our own Native Americans.

Many people help to make the World Festival happen each year. Major roles were played by members of the RIA board and many additional volunteers and participants. We thank all of them as well as the custodians and cafeteria staff at Mayo H.S. We will try to schedule the '08 Festival earlier in April next year so that we don't compete with many other community events. We hope that you will give us your advice and your help as we look begin to plan the '08 World Festival. If you have ideas the planning committee invites you to join in the planning for next year.

Thank you sponsors and contributors: We are a non profit organization and cannot put on annual World Festival without financial assistance. We thank again this year the Mayo Foundation, Jim and Judy Sloan Foundation, First Steps, USBank, Olmsted County Human Rights Commission, Venture Computers, Rochester Community and Technical College.

Latest News

Rochesterfest Parade: We hope that you saw the RIA unit #104 of the Rochesterfest parade. We thank Tom Kadlec Honda dealer for providing a truck driven by Manuel Valdez. International students from RCTC were among our parade volunteers holding flags loaned by Lee Herold of Herold's Flags, who has always provided flags of all nations for RIA events.

RIA International Scholarship: RIA has for many years presented scholarship aid to two continuing international students at RCTC. With a matching grant given by Donald Layton to honor Phyllis Layton, two Scholarships awards of \$1000 each were presented at the award ceremony by Phyllis Layton to Suad Ali and to Dennis Welford Santiago. Congratulations to the two students. Following the ceremony, Phyllis and Don Layton were pleased to meet Suad and Dennis and Dennis's parents visiting from the Philippines.

Diversity Council News: Diversity Council seeks new facilitators for it Prejudice Reduction program for the schools. Training will be given to all new volunteers. They are looking for people to join the team of facilitators that lead Prejudice Reduction Workshops in local schools. The PRW series consists of 13 fun, interactive lessons for grades K-12, focusing on various aspects of diversity and respect for all. This job is incredibly flexible -- facilitators

generally work from 0-10 hours a week depending on their availability --- it pays \$20 an hour. All facilitators receive 30 hours of training (paid at minimum wage), which is scheduled for Mondays, 2 - 5 p.m., beginning July 16. If you have questions, please contact Education Director Kelly Nguyen at 282-9951. Check their website at diversitycouncil.org.

Upcoming Events

The English Conversation Group will meet during the summer usually on the 3rd Friday morning of each month at 10AM. Those who would like to take part should call Betsy at (507)289-3359.

International Summer Picnic July 19 at Silver Lake park. The Mayor's International Affairs Committee and the Rochester International Association invite all members and new international residents and visitors to attend it annual summer picnic on Thursday, July 19 from 6:00-8:30pm at the Shelter in Silver Lake park next to the Fire Station on 7th St. NE. Rain or shine, we have a roof. Meet interesting people like yourself from around the world. Bring your family and friends, and please bring your favorite picnic food to share on the buffet table. We will also provide additional picnic food, beverages, plates, etc. Families welcome; Playground for children; dress is casual. * Herta Matteson will not be home to receive calls as she is in Germany with her mother, who is terminally ill. Call Phyllis (507)288-1197 if there are questions.

Peace Lantern Floating Ceremony August 6: Silver Lake East shelter: 7-9pm This traditional ceremony and peace celebration remembers the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan ending World War 2 in 1945. Come and make a lantern to float in Silver Lake at dusk. For more information, call Junko Maruta at 282-0139.

Greek Festival August 24-26: Traditional food, music, dancing, silent auction outdoors at the Greek church site on west Center Street. No admission fee.

International Speakers luncheons at the Y:

Members of this group look forward to getting together on the 2nd Wednesday of each month for a delicious luncheon prepared by Fred Regal caterer and a talk by a local international willing to talk about life in their native country or a recent trip abroad. We will resume the luncheon meetings in September 12. We invite you to be a speaker for a meeting. Call Phyllis at 507 288-1197 if you would like to speak at a lunch. You will be rewarded with an interested audience and a free lunch.

Global Connection Days “Immigration from the Other Side”

will take place at RCTC Oct. 9-11th Save the dates and plan to attend for Panel discussions each day on immigration, Multicultural student performances, Ethnic Fashion show, Drama presentation, International food dishes in the cafeteria. The coordinator each year is Lillyam Arroyave, Spanish teacher at RCTC. Watch for final program announcements in the next newsletter.

RIA Board meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the IMMA office meeting room at 2500 Valley High Drive NW.

RIA Memberships

Renewals and new memberships are needed now! Like most non-profit groups, RIA's fiscal year ends July 30th. We hope that all our members will respond to our low-key membership drive. We don't offer premium gifts and we don't want to call your phone at dinner time to ask for your yearly membership. We have not raised the dues since the organization was formed so that everyone can join, receive our newsletter and participate in our many events. Membership information and registration is on page 4 of this newsletter. An envelope is enclosed with the new address of the RIA: 2500 Valley High Drive NW. Rochester 55901. This is the new location of the IMAA (Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association), which has moved from its former location and still provides office space, telephone (507)289-5960, Ext 116 with answering machine for leaving your message and a mailing address for the RIA. The RIA Board will meet also at this new location. Members and visitors and prospective board

members are always welcome at these meetings, which take place on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 7:00-9:00pm. Come see the new office facility on July 10 at 7pm when the RIA Board will meet. We are seeking new members for the RIA board which will be elected at the annual meeting. Thanks for being a member of RIA!

RIA's annual meeting will be held at the new IMAA Board Room on Tuesday September 11 at 7pm. New board members and new officers will be elected and begin to serve at that time. Frank Hawthorne has served two terms as board president and has asked to be replaced. Anyone interested in serving is welcome to talk with Frank, who with his wife Dottie has served the RIA well for many years. He will stay on the board as past president and advisor. The board needs additional members, so anyone interested is welcome to visit the summer meetings on the second Tuesday of each month or call one of the board members for further information or to volunteer.

Technology Update

This newsletter and current events can be found on the website. <http://www.ria-minnesota.org>

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/>

Credits

President: Frank Hawthorne

Vice President: Addie Borja

Secretary: Sue Shockey

Treasurer: Ann Lance

Volunteer Coordinators: Phyllis Layton, Heidi Chaney

Memberships: Thomas Yung

Website & Technology: Thomas Yung

Newsletter Editors: Phyllis Layton, Thomas Yung

Board Members: Art Hambrun, Phyllis Layton, George Margellos, Marcella Nixon, Glen Saponari, Lee Herold, Heidi Chaney, Thomas Yung, Nathan Lee.

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:

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