

President's Message

"Holiday Greetings to our friends of many countries, cultures, and human experience, who make our lives here in Southern Minnesota so much richer. Tis indeed the "Holiday Season" in America; and to say so for many of us goes far beyond being politically correct. Even if your religious or cultural tradition doesn't call for you to celebrate Christmas, which you may know as Las Posadas or Ta Chiu, perhaps your festive time centers around the Jewish Hanukkah, or simply the coming of the New Year. I know from some of the questions we get at the Public Library, where I work, that some folks in Rochester even celebrate Winter Solstice or Yule. The point is we can be true to our own traditions, while enjoying the rich diversity of those others in our very midst who bring something new to the festival table.

I recently attended the December RIA-sponsored International Luncheon, at the Rochester Family Y, and the theme of the post-meal talk was "Sharing Seasonal Holidays." One woman, Heidi Buettner, gave a wonderful account of the culturally-rich Christmas traditions of her German childhood; and for a time we were all transported with her to simpler, less materialistic era. The main thing about this special time of year is that it is a time for gathering with our families to reflect on the past, resolve good things for the future, and renew our significant commitments. On behalf of the Rochester International Association, my wish for you in 2006 is that you experience many of those meaningful moments of happiness; and I sincerely hope that we can spend some of them together as we celebrate the richness of our various cultures."

-- Frank Hawthorne, President, RIA



Rochester International Association

Winter 2005-2006 Newsletter

Technology Corner

Please bookmark our RIA website at <http://www.ria-minnesota.org>

Thomas Yung has worked hard to bring the RIA and its Board members up to speed on the internet possibilities for communication and feedback from members. He and his wife Binh have been hard at work on making sure our RIA membership list is up-to-date.

"In the near future, we hope to improve our ability to track and communicate with RIA members. In order to make this goal happen, we need your help. In the coming months, keep an eye out on the website for new functions that will allow us to service you better as well as to keep our mailing costs down. For instance, you will be able to sign up for electronic mail versions of our newsletters. Simply, provide us with your updated e-mail address. You can choose whether to continue receiving paper versions or go completely electronic. You will be able to see your membership information and keep us updated if anything should change. We are also looking at a prize drawing for people that sign up for electronic-only versions of our newsletters. Again, don't forget to subscribe to our online news feed at <http://ria-minnesota.org/feed/> to keep up with the latest postings on the website."

-- Thomas Yung, RIA Technology Chair

Rochester International Association Events

International Luncheons at the Y

We have been happy to see many members and new friends have at the luncheons this year. We hope that others will join us on the second Wednesday of each month in Balfour Hall at the Rochester Family Y. Reservations are needed. Please call Betsy (289-3359) or Joyce (282-1676) to attend or to volunteer to help at the luncheons or be a speaker at some future luncheon. Cost for each lunch is now \$8 (\$7 for RIA and Y members). Speakers are needed for upcoming programs. Call Phyllis at 288-1197.

January 11, 2006:

Cruising Russian Waterways; Esther Pfeiffer and Phyllis Layton.

February 8, 2006:

To be announced. (Would you like to speak at this meeting?)

March 8, 2006:

Speaker will be Dr. Gustavo A. Castellanos, PhD, from Guatemala (now Oregon, USA) a friend of Blanca Pineda.

English Conversation Group

The English Conversation Group meets **monthly from 10:00AM to 12 noon** usually on the **third Friday of each month** for friendship and informal conversation in English for new internationals and for others who wish to join us. We meet at the home of a member or at a coffee-shop location. Call Betsy Munroe at 289-3359 for more information about the group and location of the meetings. The December meeting on Dec.16 was at the home of Joyce Gibbs.

RIA Board Meetings

The RIA Board meets on the second Tuesday of each month at the IMAA Board room, 300 11th Ave NW. All members and friends of the association are invited to attend. Those who are interested in becoming board members are especially welcome.

Thanks to Mayor Brede's International Affairs Committee and Fred Regal

Thanks to Mayor Brede, Kathy Wang and the International Affairs Committee for hosting the annual Welcome Reception for new Internationals in Rochester on October 6 at City Hall. and also helping to host the Thanksgiving Dinner held Thursday, Nov. 24, at the Congregational Church.

The annual International Thanksgiving Dinner was once more a great success. Many new international families from the community and the Mayo Clinic attended the celebration at the Congregational Church sponsored by the RIA and the Mayor's International Affairs Committee. Fred Regal and his family again donated, cooked and served this annual dinner in memory of Fred's mother. We thank the Regal family for their generosity for these many years. Kathy Wang was again the able coordinator for the event; many volunteers came to help. Former Mayor Chuck Hazama attended and represented the city. Thanks also to the Congregational Church for the use of their building and for everyone who helped.

Community Multi-Cultural Events and Information

Wednesday, January 11, 2006, 7 p.m. Mayo High School Auditorium: Dr. Mykee Fowlin returns to Rochester schools with his gripping fast-paced performance on the theme of discrimination. This evening performance is open to the public.

Monday, January 16, 2006, Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration. Watch for announcements of events –breakfast, rally, parade, and celebration events.

Tuesday, January 17, 2006, 6:40 p.m. Rochester Civic Theatre: Dr. King's Dream. The nationally acclaimed Mixed Blood Theatre presents a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, joined by local performing artists including Deon Allen, SeVy, Suga 'n' Spyce, Jericho Brass, Anthony Cooke, Rochester Community Baptist Church Choir. Dessert reception following. Tickets \$10, are on sale January 3 at the theatre box office.

Saturday, January 28, 2006, Chinese New Year Celebration: Willow Creek Middle School. Call Yuan Le at 282-6902 for further information.

Rochester International Film Group: For information about the group, international films at the Rochester Public Library and local theatres and the spring festival, check the websites www.RIFG.org for information on the films. Contributions for the spring filmfest are welcome and contributors will be put on the mailing list. Send a tax-deductible check to RIFG at P.O. Box 6803, Rochester MN 55903. RIFG co-sponsors the free iFilm series shown at 6PM on the second Wednesday each month at the Public Library.

Rochester Community College: The Rochester International Association is now listed as a benefactor on the new Donor's Wall on the mezzanine level of the Atrium. RIA has sponsored scholarships for many years for two international students in the second year of their studies at RCTC. Bo Ram Kim and Cristina Ruales are RIA's international scholarship recipients this year.

Diversity Council: George Thompson will retire as executive director December 24: He will be honored at a special Commemorative Dinner on Thursday, January 12 at the Kahler Hotel. Tickets for this gala tribute dinner are available for \$50 at the Diversity Council office at 220 S. Broadway. Call 282-9951 for information. Check the website too for the E-calendar of Multicultural Events in Rochester www.diversitycouncil.org. Kay Hocker has been selected as new executive director. Kay began volunteering at the Diversity Council in June 2001 as Education Committee Chair. Within a year, Kay had accepted a role as Education Director and brought her passion, educational background, and corporate experience to managing the Prejudice Reduction Workshop program and creating new adult education. The Diversity Council invites individual and business membership and in its efforts to build a community where each person is respected and welcomed as a valuable member of society. It collaborates with RIA and other local organizations to promote diversity and respect in our community and publishes each year a calendar of multicultural events in the community.

Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association: The IMAA provides support services to the all the refugee communities in Rochester. Its bilingual staff also provides interpreter and translator services to the community. The IMAA also provides RIA office space, telephone service and internet access. The new RIA office is upstairs near the front entrance, You can call RIA at the IMAA phone number 289-5960. Please leave a message.

World Festival 2006

The 30th Annual Rochester World Festival is scheduled for April 7th and 8th, 2006. The theme will be “Around the World in 30 Years”

In 2006, the RIA celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Rochester World Festival. This annual festival was the brain child of the late Fuad Mansour, an Arab immigrant and Mayo employee. He organized the first festival as a special celebration of the bicentennial of the U.S.A. by the Jaycees. The following year Fuad took the idea to the community and helped later to organize the Rochester International Association to continue this celebration of the diversity of our city. The RIA dedicates this festival to the memory of Fuad Mansour, who died in 1997. We have called him the father of the World Festival.

A poster contest is taking place in the Rochester Schools to design a poster for this World Festival. All secondary students are eligible to submit drawings. A prize of \$50 will be given for the best poster design. Ann Lance has coordinated this activity. The winning poster design will be selected by the board in January.

The cultural recital, choreographed by April Dahl, will be held the evening of **Friday, April 7th** at Century High School. Dancers and musicians will perform cultural or holiday music and dances from their home countries. The dancers are amateurs proudly sharing their talents and background. After each performance the Master of Ceremonies asks the performers to explain their performances to give the audience a greater understanding of the piece. Auditions for the dance performances will be held January through February 28th at the Dahl Dance Studio at 1619 N. Broadway *by appointment only*. Please contact April Dahl by phone at 507-263-0976 or by email at babydahlmn417@msn.com.

The fun doesn't end when the stage grows dark! On **Saturday, April 8th** the Parade of Nations kicks off the cultural displays, children's activities and ethnic dining portion of the World Festival. The halls of Century High School will be filled with flags, artifacts, posters and videos featuring countries around the world. The day is full of fun and is great learning experience for everyone.

To serve on the Festival Planning committee, contact Denise Stegall. Leave a message for RIA at 507-289-5960. A form is included in this issue. Those who took part in other festivals will be mailed an application forms. Anyone else interested in participation in any portion of the program or volunteering to help should leave a message at the Rochester International Association office, 507-289-2960 or by sending an email to Denisestegall@aol.com. The deadline to sign up for participation in the Saturday portion of the World Festival is March 25th.

Financial sponsors and contributors are also needed. We appreciate the contribution of previous donors: Mayo Foundation, US Bank, Olmsted County Human Rights Commission, Rochester Community and Technical College, James and Judy Sloan Foundation, Venture Computers, IMAA, and the Janet Lang Dance Studio. Thank you for your past support. With your help this year's World festival will be the best!

The RIA is using the United Way website and the RIA website to help recruit and track our volunteers. Sign on with RIA on the volunteer website www.uwolmsted.org.

Rochester International Association
300 N.W. 11th Ave., Suite 110
Rochester, MN 55901
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President: Frank Hawthorne

Vice President: Addie Borja

Secretary: Sue Shockey

Treasurer: Ann Lance

Volunteer Coordinator: Phyllis Layton

Membership: Binh & Thomas Yung

Website Producer: Thomas Yung

Newsletter Editors: Phyllis Layton &
Thomas Yung

Board Members: Denise Stegall, Phyllis
Layton, George Margellos, Luna Mukher-
jee, Dottie Hawthorne, Marcella Nixon,
Glen Saponari, Lee Herold

**RIA's Office is at IMAA, 300 11th
Ave. N.W. Suite 110, Rochester, MN
55901. 289-5960, Ext. 16**

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

Website:
www.ria-minnesota.org

Membership...
The Rochester International Association
needs YOUR MEMBERSHIP.

RIA's membership year begins each July.
We thank those who renewed this sum-
mer. New memberships are welcome at
any time of the year. A membership appli-
cation form is on the back page of this
newsletter.

You may also send an e-mail or call any of
the board members. If you receive this
newsletter and are not a member, please
join now.

We hope you will become an
active member of the RIA and
volunteer for the 2006 World Fes-
tival.

RIA MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN TO ALL PLEASE JOIN TODAY!

RIA's office is at IMAA, 300 11th Ave. N.W. Suite 110, Rochester, MN 55901. RIA board
meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the board room. RIA's phone
number is 289-5960, Ext. 16. Leave a voice mail message.

**RIA's Mission: Celebrating cultural diversity and providing opportunities for mul-
ticultural 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
community.

Annual membership dues: Individual \$20 _____
Student/Senior \$15 _____ Family \$30 (\$48 for 2 years) _____
Organization \$30 _____ Business \$50 _____

Name or Names: _____

Address: _____

phone: e-mail: _____

country/heritage: _____

Interest/talents you can share: _____

Mail to: RIA, 300 11th Ave. N.W., Suite 110, Rochester, MN 55901

Rochester International Association Presents:
World Festival 2006

“Around the World in 30 Years” April 7-8, 2006

The 30th annual Rochester International Association World Festival will be held on Friday April 7th, and Saturday April 8th, 2006 at Century High School - 2525 Viola Road in NE Rochester. The theme for this year’s festival is **“Around the World in 30 Years”**. If you are interested in participating in the Saturday cultural activities please complete the form below. There is a non-refundable \$5 registration fee for all groups excluding RIA members, RCTC students, individual and corporate sponsors. *Selling of products is prohibited.*

World Festival Saturday Events:

- 1. Parade of Nations** (10:00am) Interested participants parade through the school wearing ethnic dress carrying their countries flag. (RIA may be able to provide a flag courtesy of Herold Flag Shop)
- 2. Country/Cultural/Organizational Displays** (10:00am – 3:00pm)
- 3. Children’s Activities** (11:00am – 2:00pm)

For questions regarding the World Festival, please leave a message at (507)-289-2960, ext. 16 or send an e-mail message to denisestegall@aol.com.

World Festival Registration Form

Country/Group/Organization _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please mark the activities you are interested in participating in.

Parade of Nations: Yes ___ No ___

Country/Cultural/Organizational Displays: Yes ___ No ___

Number of Tables (limit 2) ___ Number of Chairs (limit 4) ___

TV/VCR (additional \$20 fee) Yes ___ No ___

Please send registration form and fee to RIA at 300 11th Avenue NW, Suite 110 Rochester, and MN 55901 by **March 24, 2006**.