



Korean Focus Northwest

Supporting families with children of Korean heritage

Letter from the Board

We had our second quarterly board meeting on April 2nd. All members are invited and encouraged to attend board meetings. Our next meeting will be on July 9th at the Bellevue Hyatt Hotel.

We gained a new Korean Focus NW member family and a Treasurer recently with Karen Nakagawa volunteering to serve! Thank you Karen for joining and giving of your valuable time. However, we are now seeking a new Membership chair so contact me if you are interested in that role.

I would like to recognize some recent work by board members. Lauren Soliday has been an astounding leader to this organization and a wonderful help in transitioning work to the new board members. Jen Astion has been working on the new Web site. It looks great and we will see more improvements to design and function as we move forward with the new site. Also, Mary Edwards has done a great job with this newsletter and we've received some very nice feedback on her last edition. She welcomes your contributions so please contact her if you have something to add.

Our Event coordinator, Cindy Callahan, is busy helping us make preparations for Children's Day. We hope to enjoy the same lovely weather we had last year at the beautiful Beaver Lake Park in Sammamish. Please join us – all are welcome, so encourage non-member friends and family to come as well. We are blessed to have generous contributors that make our event a rich, authentic experience. This year, we will have a wonderful Korean buffet lunch donated by our friends at KIMWA, as well as activities and a performance by the Compass Christian Center. Read about these friends of our organization in this newsletter.

Please contact us if you would like to help out – we need volunteers for the Children's Day event. Looking forward to seeing you all at Children's Day on May 3rd!

Leslie Frank

Children's Day Event!

Sunday, May 3rd 2009

1:30 - 4:30 PM

[Lodge at Beaver Lake Park](#)

25101 SE 24th Street, Sammamish

ACTIVITIES:

- Korean buffet: 1:45 -2:45 (graciously donated by our friends at KIMWA)
- Traditional Korean Mask Dance
- Mini-dance lesson in Korean Mask Dance
- Tae Kwon Do demonstration
- Korean Arts and Crafts and Games

DISCOUNT FOR PRE-REGISTRATION BY APRIL 27TH

\$20.00 per family, \$10.00 individuals & students

Admission the day of the event: \$25.00 per family, \$10.00 individuals & students

Please send your RSVP via email to RSVP@koreanfocusnw.org

2009 Events Calendar

May 3	Children's Day, 1:30-4:30, Beaver Lake Park, Sammamish
May 15-17	Han Woo Ri Festival , Federal Way
August 27-30	Camping trip
July 9	KFNW Board Meeting (Bellevue Hyatt)
Fall	Chusok
October 1	KFNW Board Meeting (location TBD)

Friends of Korean Focus NW

We hear the names of these groups mentioned often, but we wanted to make sure you all know a bit more about the Korean cultural groups who generously donate their time, food and talents to our event. Be sure to reach out to these generous friends at Children's Day in May!

KIMWA

KIMWA stands for Korean Interracial Marriage Women's Association. It has local groups around the world and the one based in Federal Way is hoping to forge relationships with Korean Focus NW in the spirit of helping our children stay connected to their cultural heritage. The group is made up of Korean women who are married to non-Koreans—some are busy professionals, many are active retirees. The local group is entering its third year, and they have hosted an Adoption Celebration in November the past two years.

For 2009, they are hoping to move their third celebration from Federal Way to Renton to make it more accessible to the members of Korean Focus NW. Our Chair Leslie Frank has met with the group and explains, "Their hearts are touched by stories of adoption. As people sensitive to interracial experience, they hope to start long term connections with adoptees and their families." They will be donating food for this year's Korean Focus NW Children's Day, and they will be at the event to participate in activities and get to know us a little better. Please reach out to these generous women at the event and make them feel welcome and treasured for their kindness and gifts to us.

COMPASS CHRISTIAN

An adult adoptee and member of Compass Christian Church, Kim Berges, contacted Korean Focus NW a few years ago and asked to help us out. Kim and other volunteers from her church have lent their talents, equipment and efforts to help us with events like Children's Day. Last year, Compass came through with a tae kwon do performance and royal fan dance demonstrations, as well as many volunteers again. This year, Susan will perform a Mask Dance and lead our kids (and some of us?) in a mini-lesson on doing the Mask Dance. Please make sure to thank the Compass volunteers!

FIUTS

Korean students attending the University of Washington who, through FIUTS, have embraced many of our Korean Focus NW families. These young people always bring joy and energy to our events. Learn more about short-term hosting of a FIUTS student at the [FIUTS website](#).

Put a Little Blog in Your Life

We are lucky that the times make it much easier for us and our kids to find each other and find information about Korea and Korean culture. Just the other day my five-year-old son was asking, "What's cow in Korean?" – a quick trip to the computer and we found "Ahm soh" or "soh" with the Korean letters spelling cow. What a great resource!

Blogs can be written by individuals or groups and can take the form of a journal, a collection of news, or a family or organizational bulletin board. We asked some of the board members about Korea-related blogs that members might enjoy. Check these out and send [us](#) your favorite Web resources that help you stay in touch with Korean and Korean-American culture!

<http://kadnexus.wordpress.com/>

The Transracial Korean Adoptee Nexus

<http://heartmindandseoul.typepad.com/weblog/>

Reflections, observations and musings of an adult Korean adoptee and adoptive parents

<http://www.antiracistparent.com/>

For parents committed to raising children with an anti-racist outlook

<http://www.8asians.com/>

A collaborative blog of young Asian-Americans and Asian-Canadians with their perspective on race, arts, politics, culture, health, etc.

Han Woo Ri Festival

May 15-17, 2009 at the Federal Way Commons ([Web site](#))

This unique cultural festival celebrates all aspects of both contemporary and traditional Korean and Korean-American culture. The Festival features both contemporary and traditional performing arts, exhibits, sports, games and food. Continuing a theme started in 2007, the Festival will also showcase technology and youth culture – all key elements of the "Korean Wave." With a sizable and prominent Korean-American population, Federal Way is proud to be the home of an event that showcases Korean culture to people throughout the Greater Seattle region and the Pacific Northwest. The festival provides a unique entertainment opportunity, as well as strengthens understanding and appreciation of Korean culture and its place in the context of the Pacific Northwest and its rich cultural diversity.

Letter from Korea

By Eric Yonggil Suh

Spring greetings from Seoul, all!

Probably lots of you might have experienced some communication difficulties when you speak with people from other countries who are not familiar with English. Sometimes these communication difficulties are due to strange pronunciation or intonation. Sometimes these are caused by grammar mistakes. Sometimes, they result from unfamiliar expressions/words, even though they're ENGLISH themselves!!

Like other Asian countries, Korea also has its own-style of English, what we call 'Konglish'.

For your information, I'm here with some instances of Konglish:

Handphone	Eye shopping
Red tea	Meeting
Back mirror	Do you know me?
Where is here?	Y-shirt
Back number (of athletes)	Skinship
Fighting!	Sharp pencil
Couple rings	Handle (of car)
Vinyl house	One shot! (when you drink)
Vinyl bag	Dead ball (of baseball)
Suntan cream	Tire punk

The words and phrases above are the most generally mentioned examples of broken English in Korea. You may be unfamiliar with lots of them, but I think possibly you may take a hint at what they intend by your intuition. If you're done, why don't you compare your own answers with mine on the last page of this newsletter? (Good luck to you, all!)



It's true that most Koreans are stressed out by English. English is one of the main subjects for the Korean SAT, so that students cannot avoid struggling against it during all their school days to get a good score for going to a college. Even at a college, they can't stop studying their English since they know TOIEC or TOFLE score is very important for finding a job after graduation. And even when he or she gets a job, they need to study English continuously. Why? It's because a lot of Korean companies generally require a satisfactory language score together with other qualifications when their employees are given promotions.

We understand every foreign language is not easy to learn, but English, compared to other Asian neighbors' languages such as Japanese or Chinese, is specially difficult for us thanks to its totally different and unfamiliar grammar, structure, vocabulary and pronunciation from our mother tongue.

But we don't intend to give up English at all, since we're aware of the attractiveness of English! It is well-known that one of the quickest and best ways to understand foreign culture is through learning their language. With American English, we were able to enter into a new world of Hollywood and music. With Singaporean English, we were able to get to know their history and where their power of economic competitiveness is from.

Literally, to native Koreans who are not accustomed to English, the language is at once 'Love' and 'Hate', and even at this time, lots of Koreans devote themselves to English regardless of one's likes or dislikes of it. It's a usual thing to find English-written signboards, shopping bags, brands, lots of borrowed words from English from place to place in Seoul when you come here someday. With such overflowing English, some of you can feel comfortable, but some of you, who expect Korea's own essence, can be confused. I agree that this English-preference may be our Identity lost. But in any case, I ask you to try to find Korean's enthusiasm and efforts on English to strive to keep step with a recent trend of Globalization.

As well, I hope some of you and your children have a chance to learn some Korean language to feel the essence of the Korean culture.

PS. For our global friends who are worrying about contaminated Korean language, I'm adding that some mass media and scholar's group here have led a movement for the clean-up of the Korean language. They believe 'keeping Korean' is 'keeping Korean culture and spirits.'

Our special contributor from Korea, Eric Yonggil Suh, is a friend and former colleague of board member Mary Edwards. Eric lives in Seoul and works in public relations and marketing for RealNetworks. He grew up in Seosan, Daejeon, and lives in Seoul with his wife, Dalyun Yoon.

Family Focus: The Peaches

(In photo from left: Joel, Chloe, Cheri, Thomas, & Matt Peach)

For many of us, awareness of Korean culture was not a part of our lives before we decided to adopt children from Korea. It is one of the true gifts of adoption that our families can become global—within the four walls of our own homes. The Peach family has certainly built many bridges to Korean culture in their lives – both inside and out of their home.

Before they were married, Cheri and her husband Matt discussed building their future family through adoption. In college, Cheri had lived with a family who had adopted a little girl from India. The experience made a big impression on her and led her to want to create a family both through adoption and biologically.

When their first child Chloe was about two years old, they began their research and preparations for adopting a child internationally. Their son Thomas came to them from Korea at six months old. And when he was three, they started to consider adopting again. A year later, their son Joel came home at 4-1/2 months old, arriving around Thanksgiving 2006.

Having recently moved to the Seattle area from Michigan after Thomas' adoption, the Peaches did not know many other adoptive families. They were lucky one day at the park to be spotted by Korean Focus NW member, Karin Oie. Karin told Cheri about our group so Cheri joined Korean Focus NW and learned about the [Morning Star Korean Cultural Center](#). Morning Star, located in Lynnwood, is one of the country's premier Korean cultural organizations and has been operated by Mrs. Cheh for nearly 25 years.

"I asked if our daughter Chloe could take the dance lessons even though she's not Korean, and Mrs. Cheh said, 'Sure!'" Cheri explained, "Mrs. Cheh sees Korean culture as not just for the adopted child, but for the family as a whole – as a family culture." This began an ongoing, active involvement with Morning Star for the family. Soon after, Chloe, Cheri and Thomas began Korean language lessons while Matt stayed with baby Joel. Cheri explained, "Now it's a family affair, we all go. The kids do their lessons and we adults take a class."



The family's involvement with Morning Star continues to deepen. This year, in addition to Korean language, Cheri and Matt are taking lessons on the Jang-gu – the big Korean drum. And when Mrs. Cheh asked Cheri to teach English at the Korean Montessori Preschool, she began to do that two hours a week. Next year, they are planning to have their youngest child Joel attend the school. Cheri said, "There are about 24 kids in the preschool – all the kids are Korean or have one parent who is Korean. The teachers mostly speak and teach in Korean." Chloe, now 10 years old, continues her dance classes at Morning Star and has traveled with the group to performances as far away as Alaska. Most of the girls in the dance group are Korean, but Cheri says Chloe fits in well, "Chloe is very proud that her brothers are Korean and that her family is built this way. She feels very much a part of the identity."

Beyond Morning Star, Cheri has gone out of her way to share Korean culture with her kids' school classes. She has visited Chloe's class to talk about Korean culture, adoption and food, and even served up some Kimchi mandu (김치만두) for the class. "They liked it!" (cont.)



Peach family with ESWS foster mothers, and FIUT students.

Last year, the Peaches hosted two foster mothers from ESWS (one had been Joel's foster mom) and a church pastor from Korea. While their house was crowded and language was a struggle, it was a valuable experience for all of them.

On the last night of the visit, they hosted a dinner with two FIUT students who are friends of the family. Because the FIUT students could translate, they deepened their friendship with the visitors. Cheri said, "One of the amazing things was to learn how many foster children these mothers have taken care of. One mother had 21 kids over 11 years." Cheri also said that the Catholic Community Services minister explained how he provides council to birth mothers, "He said that when the birth moms come in, some can only see the pregnancy as a problem. He counsils them to see the positive, that this baby is a blessing and can be a blessing to another family." Cheri and her family were grateful for the experience of the visit. They were gratified to able to express their appreciation to the foster mom who cared for Joel, and to the others for their contributions to birth moms, children and adoptive families.

The Peaches are a wonderful example of a family embracing Korean culture. "The most important thing for us is that when our sons get older and question why they were placed for adoption or why they are not in a Korean family – they will see all the Korean families who love them and are a part of their lives so they will know they weren't rejected by their culture or countryfolk."

By having both parents and all the kids involved with Korean culture, they each get to experience being on all sides of American, Korean and adoptive cultures. Cheri is able to empathize with her son Thomas when he has expressed some challenges with being Korean. Cheri, thinking of herself in the mirror with a dance class full of graceful, Korean women, shares with him, "Sometimes when I am in my Korean dance class, I wish that I was Korean!"

Have a Little Writer or Artist in the House?

We are seeking kids to contribute to the newsletter – maybe your child would like to write an article (or poem, drawing, etc.) about a Korean event, book, movie or cultural experience they have had. Please contact [Mary Edwards](#) with ideas and suggestions for contributions.

A Young Korean Adoptee Gives Back

The following Q&A is with Lindsey Graham, an 8th grader from Whidbey Island. When her class started a charitable 8th Grade Project, Lindsey chose to support Korean foster children and orphans through Holt and WACAP. You can visit [Lindsey's blog](#) and make a donation to this inspired project! Way to go Lindsey!

Tell us about your family and when you were adopted.

I have a brother who is 16 named Michael. He was adopted from South Korea also, but we're not biologically related. I was 5 months old when I was adopted. I was adopted from Taegu, South Korea.

What made you think of WACAP and Holt for your 8th grade project?

I thought of WACAP for my 8th grade project because I wanted to choose something that I was truly, 100% passionate about. I wanted to help kids who get too old for Holt and get put on the streets and kids who have physical problems.

Have you attended WACAP events or been involved with them in the past?

I have gone to every WACAP Family Camp at Sun Lakes Resort except last year. And I went to the Zoo picnic last year. But mostly just the family camp.

How have your fellow 8th grade students reacted to your project? Are they curious about adoption or Korea?

My friends have thought it's really cool what I'm doing since I'm trying to help other kids get adopted. My teachers think that what I'm doing is especially cool since they haven't ever had someone do an 8th grade project like mine. Adoption at my school is not really something that is a big deal. Our students are pretty open to anything. No one gets treated differently. It's like, people are people no matter what race, religion, or where they come from.

Are you interested in Korea and Korean culture?

I am interested in the Korean culture and Korea. I want to learn about what kinds of things they celebrate and how they celebrate it. I also would like to try to learn Korean but I have found it's very hard.

Have you traveled to Korea or would you like to?

I haven't gone to Korea. But I am planning on going there when I turn 18 or sometime later when I'm not focusing on high school.

How can we donate?

I need all donations by **May 16th** – please address your envelope and check to the "Giving Back Fund" and mail to:
Whidbey Island Bank, P.O. Box 211, Clinton, WA 98236

“Adopted” the Movie

Asian Adult Adoptees of Washington (AAAW) and the Wing Luke Asian Museum (WLAM) have extended an invitation to members of Korean Focus NW to attend this special movie event:

- What:** "Adopted" - documentary feature film screening. Clips from the film's accompanying educational DVD will also be shown, followed by a Q&A with the film's co-producer, Nancy Kim Parsons.
- Where:** Wing Luke Asian Museum, 719 South King St., Seattle, WA 98104
- When:** Saturday, May 9, 2009
Film screening: 1:00 - 2:30 pm
Q&A and clips from teaching guide: 2:45 - 4:00 pm
- Cost:** \$15 per ticket (discounts available for Museum members). Tickets will be available online through Brown Paper Tickets or through the Wing Luke Asian Museum admissions desk.
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Read a New Book? Tried a New Restaurant?

Please contribute to our group with reviews and recommendations for Korea-related books, movies, events, food, restaurants for adults and kids. Please email [Mary Edwards](#) with your contributions and we'll add them to our quarterly newsletter.

Subscribe to Adoptive Families and donate to us!

[Order online](#) and use code Q09315 when you subscribe. Korean Focus NW gets \$5 for every subscription!

Did You Renew Your Membership?

Don't forget to renew your \$20 membership in Korean Focus NW for 2009. visit the Web site to complete a renewal form and mail it with your check to: Korean Focus NW, P.O. Box 15453, Seattle, WA 98115

Seeking Membership Chair for Board

We are seeking a new board member to oversee our Membership activities. These include receiving new membership forms, passing payment to the Treasurer, updating the membership directory and email listing, managing membership renewals and contacting new members. The role includes a quarterly board meeting and active work at the Children's Day and Chusok events where many new members sign up or renew. Please contact Board Chair, [Leslie Frank](#) if you are interested.

ANSWERS TO ERIC'S KONGLISH QUIZ:

<i>Handphone = Cellular phone</i>	<i>Eye shopping = Window shopping</i>
<i>Red tea = Black tea</i>	<i>Meeting = Blind date</i>
<i>Back mirror = rearview mirror</i>	<i>Do you know me? = Do I know you?</i>
<i>Where is here? = Where am I?</i>	<i>Y-shirt = White shirt, Dress shirt</i>
<i>Back number = Uniform number</i>	<i>Skinship = Touch-feely or Physical contact</i>
<i>Fighting! = Go for it!, Way to go!</i>	<i>Sharp pencil = Mechanical pencil</i>
<i>Couple rings = Matching rings</i>	<i>Handle (of car) = Steering wheel</i>
<i>Vinyl house = Greenhouse</i>	<i>One shot (drinking) = Bottoms up!, Slam it!</i>
<i>Vinyl bag = Plastic bag</i>	<i>Dead ball = Hit by a pitched ball</i>
<i>Suntan cream = Sunblock</i>	<i>Tire punk = Flat tire</i>



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