



# Mugunghwa

*The Newsletter for Members of Korean Focus NW*  
*Providing support for families with children of Korean heritage - through*  
*social activities, educational programs and cultural celebrations.*

*Winter 2008*

## KOREAN FOCUS NORTHWEST

## WEBLINKS

Welcome to our 2008 issue of the newsletter. We will be making strenuous efforts to publish more issues in the coming year and we need your help! Any information that you think might be of interest to other members, please send to Allie Fee at allief at myuw.net or 345 NW 48<sup>th</sup> St., Seattle, WA, 98107, and we will include it in the next issue. How about an article written by your child covering something of interest to the group? Or articles about family multicultural strategies?

Inside this edition we have

- New weblinks for language practice, teens and transracial issues
- Board retreat summary
- An article on the historical figures featured on new Korean money
- Volunteer opportunities
- Calendar for 2008 Korean Focus NW events
- Book review by Leslie Frank
- A summary of Lauren Soliday's trip to the Overseas Koreans Foundation 2007 Summer Cultural Program
- An extensive list of English-language Korean picture books in area public libraries by Ruth Griffith
- A student's perspective on Korean language class at Morningstar Cultural Center by Spencer Fee

Allie Fee - editor

*Mark your calendars!* UW Grad student and Adult Adoptee, Sara Docan-Morgan, will be sharing with us about her research project on racism and transracial adoptees on February 7. This will be the first KFNW **PARENT'S NIGHT** of 2008. To be held at Lauren Soliday's in Bothell - social at 6:30, discussion to begin at 7pm. rsvp admin at kfnw.org

InKAS (International Korean Adoptee Service) offers a free on-line Korean language program for adoptees. To sign up or enquire about their scholarship program, email inkas2 at yahoo.co.kr [http://www.inkas.or.kr/eng\\_default.asp](http://www.inkas.or.kr/eng_default.asp)

Overseas Koreans Foundation (OKF) has an adoption related site. OKF sponsored Lauren's recent trip to Korea on behalf of KFNW. The site has information about Korea and links to other resources (including KFNW). <http://oaks.korean.net/>

This next site is a cool place to explore with your kids to practice Korean, including songs you can listen to, dramas with English subtitles, etc. It's not just for teens!! <http://www.teenkorean.net/>

Find a host of articles and other resources at <http://www.nysccc.org/T-Rarts/T-Rarts.html> about racism, adoption and transracial issues.

For Korean Language enthusiasts, there is a new audio posting every day at <http://www.koreanclass101.com> mixing language lessons and culture. You can listen to the audio for free, but you need a (paid) membership to get the transcripts. The Friday audio blogs are aimed at more intermediate listeners.

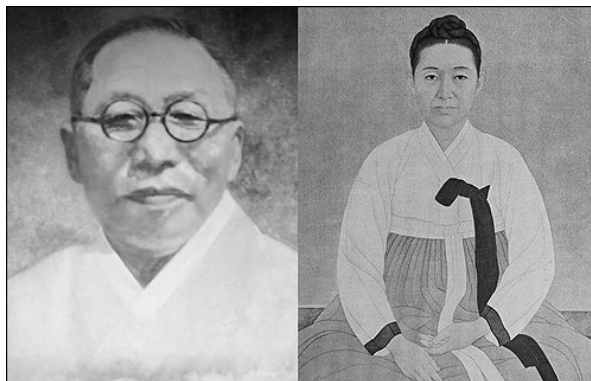
**Member dues renew each January** and are used for web and other business fees, scholarships, and to offset the cost of events. You can now renew your yearly dues online at [www.koreanfocusnw.org](http://www.koreanfocusnw.org). *Thank you to all Korean Focus NW members for their continued support.*

## Controversy in New Korean Currency Sheds Light on Old vs. New Korea

South Korea's central bank will add 50,000 and 100,000 *won* denominations to its existing collection of *won* bills that currently end at 10,000. The new bills will feature historical figures, Shin Saimdang (50,000) and Kim Koo (100,000). This decision gives us an opportunity to learn a bit about Korean heroes and cultural values.

Kim Koo (1876-1949) was a twentieth century Independence fighter. He led a provisional government from Shanghai after 1919 while Korea was under Japanese rule (1910-1945). After liberation (a consequence of Japan's loss in WWII), Kim fought against the trusteeship of the U.S. (South Korea) and the Soviet Union (North Korea) which divided Korea. Kim was an advocate for a united Korea and was assassinated on June 26, 1949 by powers impeding national unification. A Bank of Korea spokesman said that Kim was chosen to express respect for the patriot and to inspire patriotism.

Korean artist and calligrapher, Shin Saimdang (1504 - 1551), whose nickname is "wise mother," gave birth to one of the two most prominent Korean Confucian scholars of the Joseon Dynasty. Her son, Yi I, also known by his pen name Yulgok is the face on the 5,000 *won* note. She will not be the first woman to grace Korean currency: an anonymous woman and her son were shown depositing savings on a bill in 1962. Yet since the 1962 bill only lasted for only 25 days, Shin will be the only woman featured on current currency. A Bank of Korea spokesman explained that choosing Shin was intended to reflect today's spirit of valuing culture and to raise awareness of the value of home and education. Shin's selection has proven controversial. More than a dozen women's rights groups plan to protest the bank's decision because they see the choice as an affront to Korean women who are making their way through Korea's male-dominated workforce.



Kim Koo

Shin Saimdang

## Library Corner

### Ruth Griffith

Sharing Korean folk tales with your kids is such a fun way to celebrate their heritage and learn more about Korean culture. The following list (alphabetical by title) features Korean folklore in picture book format. All are available at Seattle, King County, and Sno-Isle libraries unless otherwise noted.

(To find other folk tales in your local library, use the term "Korea" along with terms like "folklore", "tales", or "children's stories". Enjoy!)

The Chinese mirror / adapted from a Korean folktale by Mirra Ginsburg ; illustrated by Margot Zemach. A retelling of a traditional Korean tale in which a mirror brought from China causes confusion within a family as each member looks in it and sees a different stranger.

The green frogs : a Korean folktale / retold by Yumi Heo. A folktale about two green frogs who always disobey their mother, explaining why green frogs cry out whenever it rains.

In the moonlight mist : a Korean tale / retold by Daniel San Souci ; illustrated by Eujin Kim Neilan. A good-hearted woodcutter finds a heavenly wife in this retelling of a Korean folk tale.

Kongi and Potgi : a Cinderella story from Korea / adapted by Oki S. Han and Stephanie Haboush Plunkett ; pictures by Oki S. Han. Although Kongi is treated unfairly by her stepmother and stepsister, she proves she is worthy to become the Prince's bride.

The Korean Cinderella / by Shirley Climo; illustrated by Ruth Heller. In this version of Cinderella set in ancient Korea, Pear Blossom, a stepchild, eventually comes to be chosen by the magistrate to be his wife.

The magic amber : a Korean legend / retold & illustrated by Charles Reasoner. An old rice farmer and his wife are repaid for their kindness and generosity.

Magic spring : a Korean folktale / retold and illustrated by Nami Rhee. An old man and his wife discover a fountain of youth and benefit from its magic, but the water has a different effect on their greedy neighbor.

The moles and the mireuk : a Korean folktale / retold by Holly H. Kwon ; illustrated by Woodleigh Hubbard. A mole goes to the sky, sun, clouds, and wind in search of the most powerful husband for his daughter, only to find him among his own kind. [not available at Seattle PL]

Mr. Pak buys a story / Carol Farley ; illustrated by Benrei Huang. The unusual story that a wealthy couple's servant buys from a thief proves to be well worth the price. [Not available at King County]

New clothes for New Year's day / by Hyun-Joo Bae. A young Korean girl describes the new clothes that she will be wearing to celebrate the new year.

Older brother, younger brother : a Korean folktale / retold Nina Jaffe ; illustrations by Wenhai Ma. After being turned out by his greedy older brother, Hungbu and his family manage to prosper when his kindness to an injured sparrow is richly rewarded.

The rabbit and the dragon king : based on a Korean tale / retold by Daniel San Souci; illustrated by Eujin Kim Neilan. Ancient Korean folk tale of the dragon king, ruler of the ocean, who is convinced that eating the heart of a rabbit will cure what ails him. [Not available at King County]

The rabbit's escape / Suzanne Crowder Han ; illustrated by Yumi Heo. Tricked into visiting the

underwater kingdom where the Dragon King of the East Sea wants his liver, a clever rabbit uses his wits to escape.

The rabbit's judgment / Suzanne Crowder Han ; illustrated by Yumi Heo. Tricked into freeing a hungry tiger from a trap, a man refuses to let the tiger eat him until they get another opinion on the situation from a disinterested party. [Not available at King County]

The rabbit's tail : a story from Korea / Suzanne Crowder Han ; illustrated by Richard Wehrman. Tiger is afraid of being eaten by a fearsome dried persimmon, but when Rabbit tries to convince him he is wrong, Rabbit loses his long tail. [This is a variation of the story in the *Tiger & the Dried Persimmon*]

Sir Whong and the golden pig / adapted by Oki S. Han and Stephanie Haboush Plunkett ; pictures by Oki S. Han. When he manages to get a loan of 1000 *nyung* by giving a fake golden pig as collateral, a stranger thinks that he has outwitted the wise and generous Sir Whong.

Sun & moon : fairy tales from Korea / adapted by Kathleen Seros ; illustrated by Norman Sibley & Robert Krause. Malevolent giants, whimsical goblins, sly rabbits, and greedy tigers are featured in these seven fairy tales.

The sun girl and the moon boy / retold and illustrated by Yangsook Choi. A hungry tiger tries to trick a brother and sister into opening their door by pretending to be their absent mother.

The tiger and the dried persimmon : a Korean folk tale / retold & illustrated by Janie Jaehyun Park. The comical tale of a tiger who is afraid of a dried persimmon and inadvertently foils a thief. [This story is the basis for the puppet show of the same name seen frequently in the Seattle area]

The two love stars : the story of Kyonu and Chingnyo / retold by Lee Mi-ae ; illustrated by Yoo Ae-ro ; translated by Lee Chunoc, John H. T. Harvey. The story of two beautiful love stars, Kyonu and Chingnyo, who can only meet at the river

of the Milky Way once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month, a day which is always rainy because of their tears of sadness. [Not available at Seattle].

### **KFNW Board Retreat**

The KFNW board retreat in November was productive and covered many issues. In attendance were Karen Dykstra, Allie Fee, Leslie Frank and Lauren Soliday. Our membership discussion included the results of member surveys on what you, the membership, like about KFNW & what you hope to get out of KFNW in the future. We discussed strategies for more active welcoming and recruitment of new members. We will keep the dues at \$20, due each January. Our five-year goals include:

- \* An ongoing mentorship program
- \* 10 people on the board, including adult adoptees and Korean-Americans
- \* Active working committees
- \* Increased involvement of adult adoptees and Korean-Americans in our events
- \* Weekend culture camp for those unable to commit to a week-long culture camp
- \* On-going Korean language & culture classes
- \* Building in socializing time for events such as Children's Day
- \* Attending events hosted by local Korean-American groups

...as well as continued work on formalizing board duties and processes. We will have quarterly board meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of January, April, July, October to be held from 7:30 to 9:30 am and, as always, all members are welcome to attend.

If you would like specifics on our board retreat, please contact Lauren Soliday (206-714-7223) or Allie Fee (206-784-6978). If you would like to learn about getting involved with our board, please contact Allie Fee or Karen Dykstra (425-865-9436).

**You can now support Korean Focus NW** with your subscription to *Adoptive Families magazine*. For each subscription, the magazine will donate \$5.00 to KFNW! See more details at this link (use code T09315): [www.adoptivefamilies.com/order/index.php?aff=T09315](http://www.adoptivefamilies.com/order/index.php?aff=T09315)

### **CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS**

We need volunteers to help with the following events:

1. Children's Day (May 4)
2. Chusok 2008
3. Lunar New Year (Feb 10)
4. Hanji Paper Craft
5. Hosts for monthly Mom's nights (now called Parent's night to welcome Dad's)

Please contact Lauren, Allie or Karen for specifics

### **BOOK REVIEW by Leslie Frank**

Mary Paik Lee, *Quiet Odyssey: A Pioneer Korean Woman in America*. Edited with introduction by Sucheng Chan. University of Washington Press, 1990.

Mary Paik Lee came to the United States in 1910 when Korean immigration was rare—she was five years old. Her autobiography reveals how she and her family of birth and later her family by marriage scrapped to put together a living in the cities and farmlands of California. This was not easy for most of the twentieth century--they faced significant discrimination and insecurity. Lee's account is very engaging and easy to read. Historian Chen Sucheng offers a 45 page introduction to the Korean history that led to the Paik family's emigration, several appendices in which she fact-checks Lee's account, and a long bibliography of resources on Korean and Korean American history for those who are interested in knowing more. Anyone interested in knowing about early Korean-American experience will not be disappointed by this compelling account.

### **Overseas Koreans Foundation (OKF) 2007**

#### **Summer Cultural Program**

#### **Lauren Soliday**

[Editor's note: This past July, Lauren went to Seoul on an Overseas Korean Foundation-sponsored trip to attend their annual cultural "camp". This conference is usually offered only to adult adoptees, but this year they invited leaders of adoptive family and adult adoptee organizations, and adoption agencies to participate. Lauren, as the chair of Korean Focus NW, was chosen after applying for an OKF grant.]

It was my honor to be chosen to attend the Overseas Koreans Foundation 2007 Summer Cultural Program and represent Korean Focus NW. I went a week early to stay with our exchange student's family to shop, sightsee and eat great meals! My host, Jonghee told me that she never cooks at home (too much work) - they either eat out or have meals delivered to their apartment. My first night, a full course meal of Dol Sot Bi Bim Bap, cold noodle soup, bulgogi, chap chae, rice, side dishes, etc. was delivered steaming hot in ceramic dishes right to the apartment door. Once you are done, the pile of dirty dishes goes out in the hall and someone from the restaurant picks them up!

Jonghee and I had some meaningful conversations about life in modern day Korea - and how expensive it is to raise children there. The schools are very competitive and children in elementary school and up are expected to attend school until late into the evening and on weekends taking English language and other course work. Of course, parents have to work more to pay for these private lessons, so it almost seems like it is all work and no play for most people living in Korea these days. No wonder the birth rate is low!

At the conference, I spent the 7 fun filled days with people from all over the world - some from adoption agencies (USA, Australia, Luxemburg), some adult adoptees (USA, Sweden, Switzerland), and some from support organizations (USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany and Korea). Participants included people who had experience with mentoring programs (NY and MN), an adult adoptee who is creating an international DNA database program to help with birth family search efforts, and a Korean American adoptive dad from California who is part of an organization (MPAK) that promotes domestic and adoption by Korean Americans here in the USA. Our days were packed with activities - museums, tea ceremony, drumming and mask performances, craft classes, enormous quantities of delicious Korean food, cooking class, sightseeing, shopping, visits with government officials, as well as networking with participants and getting ideas from each other about programs and resources for our children.

The last day was an open symposium with adult adoptees from a number of organizations there ready to begin the International Korean Adoptee Associations (IKAA) week long program in the coming days. Some discussed past and current research being done, as well as an overview and implications of the Hague Convention. The sharing and contributions were enlightening and inspiring. I learned so much, heard so many stories and views which opened my eyes to new ideas and struggles, and overall felt so extremely fortunate to be able to participate in this program. Some adult adoptees there expressed frustration with adoption agencies and the Korean government. I learned that they are working hard to make changes within the adoption agencies in Korea. It seems that when an adoptee begins a birthparent search, there is no consistency in the regulations between the 4 agencies over there. They want to change the laws to require more uniformity in how the searches are processed and to make the procedure less burdensome and more expeditious. One person suggested they ask adoptive parents to help them with their efforts. Some adoptees spoke bitterly of their relationships with their parents and could not imagine getting help there. Some of their stories were heartbreaking. I spoke up and assured them that there certainly are adoptive parents who would be willing to help them - reminding them that the work they do today will benefit our children in the future! I plan to make contact and see what help we can offer - more on this to come.

One of the highlights for me was visiting the Holt office and guest house. We were treated to Bulgogi for lunch. Bertha Holt, Harry Holt's granddaughter who lives in Seoul, joined us and shared some stories. We then visited the guest house where we snuggled with some babies waiting to be placed for adoption. Korea has a new law that babies are held for 6 months hoping for a domestic adoption before being released to overseas families. They are taking great measures to promote domestic adoption - using sports and drama stars to help society overcome unfavorable attitudes about this issue.

If you would like to see the photos from my trip, I can send you a personal invitation to view all 664 of them on a website. I came home excited about all the possibilities for our organization and especially for our children. *Kamsahamnida.*

### **Korean lessons w/ Mr. Jae!**

**By Spencer Fee**

[Editor's note - Mr. Suk & Mrs. Lee are co-teaching the Saturday morning language class at Morningstar Cultural Center. Mrs. Lee (Se-yeun) teaches the adults. We are learning the Korean alphabet and will be learning basic conversation and simple grammar next session. The children are taught by Mr. Suk (Jae) and apparently are having a ball. My husband sat in on one lesson and liked it so well, he made it a point to come to every session he could after that. The Suk/Lee's are fun, their English is very good and they are voluntarily taking a course in teaching KSL on their own time - I'd highly recommend this class!]

Mr. Jae is fun. This is the first time I decided to sit with Mr. Jae instead of with my Mom [who is in Se-yeun's adult course]. We repeated words in Korean such as "sword" or "hat" or "butterfly" or "dog". We had a battle with swords and hats made out of balloons. We also learned the Korean vowels. And I like Mr. Jae because he gives us candy and cookies. I think the Korean language is fun because we only have to repeat stuff. I want to learn how to speak Korean so I can talk to people in Korean like Myung-jun and Hyunji [our FIUTS students from 2006 & 2007] and also when we go visit Korea. The adult class is boring because it's not easy for me to understand the words. Also, my Mom makes me sit and be quiet but in Mr. Jae's we run around and attack each other with balloons, swords and hats. Me and Chloe are the oldest kids in the class and I want to help Mr. Jae when I'm in next year's class.

### **Member Profile**

Karen Dykstra, KFNW Membership Coordinator, lives in Bellevue with her husband, Tom, son Tony (13) and daughter Zoe (9). Both of her children were adopted through WACAP from Korea, and she feels fortunate to have been able to travel to Holt

in Seoul to pick up both of them. Tony was 19 months and Zoe was seven months. Witnessing Korea firsthand, meeting with the foster mothers, and learning about her children's lives prior to placement has provided Karen with treasured memories and valued cultural insights.

Karen works for the Bellevue School District as a Para-educator. Her husband is a Systems Analyst at Symetra, Tony is a seventh grader at Tillicum Middle School, and Zoe attends third grade at Spiritridge Elementary in Bellevue. They attend Eastshore Unitarian Universalist Church in Bellevue and endeavor to get away to their lot in Ocean Shores when city life gets to be too much.

Korean Focus NW is appreciative to Karen for her noteworthy efforts and initiative as membership coordinator to welcome new members and be available for questions. Karen created and tabulated the results of a survey of members, which will serve to direct the Board the future of KFNW! Thanks Karen, we're glad you're on "Board"!

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#### **Korean Focus NW Board of Directors**

Lauren Soliday, Chairperson  
Allie Fee, Vice-Chairperson  
Cindy Schroeder, Treasurer  
Karen Dykstra, Membership  
Kristin Glenn, Fundraising  
Leslie Frank, Member at Large

#### **Information Contacts**

[www.koreanfocusnw.org](http://www.koreanfocusnw.org)

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Cindy (Snohomish) 360-668-9492  
Lauren (Bothell) 206-714-7223

*Admin at koreanfocusnw.org*

Mailing Address: Korean Focus NW  
c/o 23611 48<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Bothell, WA 98021

#### **Calendar of Upcoming KFNW Events**

Korean classes at Morningstar **Jan 19-Mar 22**

Parents Night - **Feb 7**

Lunar New Year Celebration **Feb 10**

(to reserve, contact [lunarrsvp at yahoo.com](mailto:lunarrsvp@yahoo.com))

Children's Day **May 4**

Camping at Bayview **Aug 21-24**

(to reserve, contact Eileen Aker

[Eileen.aker at Verizon.net](mailto:Eileen.aker@Verizon.net))

Chusok Celebration **Fall -TBA**