

WFWP UWA: Experiencing and Loving Many Races and Cultures: WFWP and Me

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Presenting a Welcome to the City Proclamation to our co-Founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon in Houston, TX 1997

As a member of WFWP since its inception in 1992, I've served in various capacities: state leader, regional coordinator, newsletter editor, and now I represent the local Global Women's Peace Network (GWPN). Over the years, WFWP brought me into contact with a vast array of people from many places and backgrounds with whom lasting friendships have been formed. I've had the good fortune of working closely with all three of our WFWP USA presidents: Nora Spurgin, Alexa Ward, and Angelika Selle.

I believe that WFWP's founders, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, deserve great credit. Thirty years ago, they spoke about empowering women to work together - creatively and unselfishly for the sake of peace. They encouraged us to utilize our

unique qualities of femininity as friends, sisters, wives, mothers and in all our roles. Their inspiration has created incredible opportunities for people like me.

Growing up in Texas in the 1950s, I never traveled much. During the days of racial segregation, the other kids in school were pretty much like me: White, middle-class, Christian. It was quite bland, but it was all we knew. Today thanks to WFWP, I have traveled extensively and come to know people of various ethnicities, religions and age groups, whether at local, national or international events.



1996 Houston, with Mary Lou Retton, gold medal gymnast, keynote speaker

One of my first official duties was as Texas Coordinator for the Japanese-American Bridge of Peace Ceremony in Houston in August 1996, held on the 51st anniversary of the official end of World War II. What a moving and touching time that was!

In 2001, after the attacks of 9/11, our Dallas chapter began hosting "Women of Faith" gatherings. We also held our own Bridge of Peace Ceremony.

I'm filled with awe at the experiences afforded me as a WFWP leader, including the international leadership conferences. In Tokyo in 2002, I often thought of my father and his generation who fought in World War II. What a different world I was inhabiting, thanks largely to the people who came before and

laid the foundation for peace for us.

I represented WFWP in Israel at two Middle East Peace Initiatives (MEPI) where we participated in a march for peace through the Old City of Jerusalem with people from various faiths. We visited the homes of Jews, Christians, and Muslims and learned directly about their experiences and dreams. My sincere hope is that our diverse group gave the struggling people in that region some vision for overcoming conflict in the future.

I spent a week in Russia in 2005, which was truly wonderful. The WFWP International Leadership Conference was held in Moscow, and then some of us took a train to St. Petersburg and spent a glorious four days touring.



Other leadership conferences were convened in Costa Rica, London, New York, and other U.S. cities. I attended the UN Commission on the Status of Women in NYC in 2013, and WFWP activities at the presidential library of George H.W. Bush here in Texas. I went to Korea as a WFWP representative three times: in 2003, 2019 and 2020. Each activity was full of intriguing and novel experiences, always centered around meeting new people and experiencing different cultures.



I remember well when Mother Moon came for the first GWPN in Las Vegas in November 2012, forty days after the passing of her husband. Such a bittersweet time. Since then, I attended several gatherings for GWPN with the theme, "Women Are the Turning Point for Peace."

The power of women cannot be denied, and it's up to each of us to take responsibility to use our power for goodness, by "living for the sake of others," (a motto of WFWP).

I have often marveled at my unlikely experiences of the past 30 years. No doubt my parents could never have imagined in 1946 that their daughter would welcome dozens of Japanese citizens to Texas just 50 years later. By the same token, I'm sure that we can't imagine today what God has in store for our descendants in the next few decades. I am grateful to my husband and family, who have supported me on all these excursions, and I'm extremely grateful for WFWP, its founders, and the amazing people who have been part of the adventure so far.



