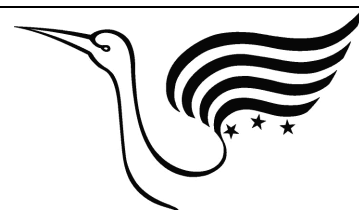


The Drumming Crane

THE NEWSLETTER OF KOREAN FOCUS FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES



KOREAN FOCUS
FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

Spring 2004

Volume VIII, Number 1

Join Us for Lunar New Year!

KOREAN FOCUS FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES (KFAF) and the KOREAN AMERICAN YOUTH ASSOCIATION (KAYA) invite you to welcome the Year of the Monkey at a Lunar New Year Celebration on February 7, 2004, for 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm at the Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington in McLean, Virginia.

Bring family and join friends to welcome the Lunar New Year! Enjoy performances of Korean drumming by the KFAF Family Drummers, tae kwon do demonstrations, cooking demonstration, hanbok exchange, crafts and Korean games for kids of all ages, and a taste of Korea. This year's crafts and games include old favorites like yut, konggi (Korean jacks), paper folding, as well as a couple new activities.

DIRECTIONS: Korean United Methodist Church of Washington is located at 1219 Swinks Mill Road in McLean, Virginia. Exit the beltway (I-495) onto Route 123 north towards McLean. Turn left (west) onto Lewinsville Road (VA Route 694). Follow Lewinsville Road for about 1.5 miles. Turn right onto Swinks Mill Road; the church is on the right near the corner of Lewinsville Road and Swinks Mill Road.

COST: \$5 per person, maximum \$15 per family **AND** ½ hour of volunteer time per family. We will need help with set-up, clean-up, and with games and crafts. You can sign up for a particular task when you arrive at the event, or you can contact Katie Zeigler at (703) 820-1171 or send an e-mail to info@koreanfocus.org to volunteer now.

We extend many thanks to our friends at KAYA who are making this event possible. For more information about the Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington, check out their web page at www.kumcgw.org.

Korean Focus Is Distributing the Movie Arirang: The Centennial of Korean Immigration

Korean Focus for Adoptive Families is proud to announce that it has agreed to be the distributor in the Washington, DC area for Arirang, the wonderful 2003 movie celebrating the 100th anniversary of Korean immigration to the United States. For those who have not seen this movie, it is a documentary along the lines of the Ken Burns films Civil War, Baseball and The History of Jazz.

Arirang is a traditional song of Korea and became the anthem of Korean Independence during the Japanese Colonization period, from 1900 through 1945. The movie details the first arrival of Koreans to the United States in Hawaii in 1903, the great importance of Korean Americans to the effort to re-gain Korean Independence, the 1992 Los Angeles Koreatown riots and the post-riot emergence of Korean political involvement. The movie also covers the dispersal of Koreans throughout America and the relations of Korean Americans with Korea during its recent emergence as a force on the world economic stage. We are very impressed with the movie and feel it is a proud history with which all of our children should be familiar.

Korean Focus is distributing the movie only in DVD format. We are selling it during craft sales for \$35. You may purchase it at any time by sending a check made payable to Korean Focus for \$38 to cover the cost of the film and shipping to: Mike LaBelle, 7213 Burtonwood Drive, Alexandria VA, 22307.

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KOREAN FOCUS FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES is an all volunteer, Federal 501(c)3 non-profit organization funded and directed by adoptive parents. We are committed to providing cultural and educational programs to help adoptive families support one another and to learn more about the Korean culture to which they are so closely bound. We welcome families from all stages of the adoption journey.

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AT-LARGE
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KOREAN FOCUS GAMES DAY

Korean Focus held a pre-holiday celebration of games and craft sale on November 23, 2003, the weekend before Thanksgiving. Many thanks to our hosts Karate Masters Tae Kwon Do studio at Belle View shopping center (in the Mt. Vernon area of Fairfax County).

The event provided families a chance to sample a lot of Korean games and to get in some early holiday shopping. The craft sale featured many items for sale that recently arrived from an October purchasing trip to Korea.



We enjoyed many traditional Korean family games, including Kwa-Do, a game involving making matches of various flower cards; Konggi (somewhat similar to jacks); Padduk (the same as Japanese "Go"); Jaeggi (think "hackysack"); Yut (somewhat like Parchessi but using funny shaped sticks instead of dice) and coloring pictures of Korean kids in costumes. Everybody had a great time!

The children from the Korean Focus family drummers group "Sound of Korea" had fun playing impromptu drumming sets on their Buk and Chongo drums. The drumming group was happy that there were families that might be interested in joining the group and expanding the size of this troupe of performers.



Book Review

Land of Morning Calm: Korean Culture Then and Now by John C. Stickler, illustrated by Soma Han. Shen's Books, 2003, 32 pages, hardcover, \$16.95

With Korea very much in the news these days, this charming picture book is timely. Unfortunately, what we see in the media is often bad news: anti-American demonstrations in the South, starvation and nuclear saber rattling in the North.

Now along comes a valuable counterpoint to those negative headlines, **Land of Morning Calm: Korean Culture Then and Now**, by the husband-and-wife team of John Stickler and Soma Han. Stickler was CBS News reporter in Seoul from 1967 to 1976 and his wife, a fine artist who created 50 watercolor illustrations for the book, was born in rural South Korea prior to the Korean War. Together they present an insightful overview of Korean customs, costumes and kimchi in happier days.

Although targeted to children, the book is filled with information for all ages. Before the Korean peninsula was electrified, for example, how did women do their ironing with sticks and (elaborately carved marble) stones? What's the difference between lunar and solar calendar holidays? What handy pocket item do Koreans use instead of signing their names, even today? Why are persimmons loved so much and what are their "seven excellences"? What are those cryptic symbols on the Korean flag? Why is the tiger so significant?

"We wrote the book," says Stickler, "because many Americans are not familiar with Korea. It's neither scholarly nor comprehensive, but offers facets of Korean tradition -- snapshots of what was once known as The Hermit Kingdom."

"I felt lost when I came to this country," says Han. "So I can understand the cultural void felt by second and third generation Korean Americans. This book will provide some ground for them to stand on. Once they are comfortable with their heritage, they can move forward with confidence and become whatever they strive to be."

The **Midwest Book Review** (September 2003) wrote, "There are very few picture books on Korean culture for kids, which alone makes **Land of Morning Calm** stand out for ages 7-12; but its other fine features include an organization by 19 topics ranging from holidays and arts to religions and home life, and beautiful displays of each by Soma Han. **Land of Morning Calm** is a lively, educational and highly recommended presentation."

The new book is available at local booksellers, on the Internet at www.shens.com or by calling the publisher's order line at (800) 456-6660.

On March 7, KFAF Presents: **Adoptism and Racism: A Mother-Daughter Journey Parent Education Workshop**

Two of the most challenging topics for adoptive parents to talk about with their child(ren) are race and birth family; yet such discussions are the most important things they can do to prepare their child(ren) to face the world. Your child will learn to be more confident and less vulnerable if you understand what lies ahead and how to talk about these questions.

Marcy Gitt from Ellicott City, MD, an adoption social worker specializing in international, transracial adoption, and her 17-year-old adopted Korean daughter, Vanessa, will share the predictable comments and questions asked, based on their life experiences.

Do not miss this highly unique opportunity to learn from their experiences, and educate family members and friends. Marcy's workshop has received very positive comments from international adoption family support organizations where they have spoken. It is particularly aimed at families with middle and high school transracial adoptive children.

We are very happy that we are able to arrange for her to speak to us. While the date, Sunday afternoon, March 7, 2004, is set; the location (somewhere in VA) is currently not. A flyer will be mailed in mid-February. Also, we'll post a note on our web page. In the meantime, save the date!

Margie Perscheid elected to Board of KAC-DC

Margie Perscheid was recently elected to a two year term to the Board of the Korean American Coalition – DC Chapter. She joins Mike LaBelle, who has been on the KAC Board for one year. We are thrilled that adoptive parents have 2 of the 20 seats on that Board and are extremely pleased that this representation reflects the continuing support of the Korean American community to our families and the adoptee portion of the Korean American community.

In September 2003, KAC-DC will be sponsoring the national KAC convention, which will be held here in Washington. Margie and Mike are both on the Programs Sub-Committee of the Convention Committee. They would appreciate any thoughts that anyone may have about potential presentations at the convention. Convention planning is progressing quickly, so don't hesitate to relay your ideas.

KAC-DC Programs

The Korean American Coalition has numerous programs that may be of interest to Korean Focus members. Information about the organization and its programs can be obtained at www.kacdc.org.

Among other programs, KAC sponsors a Washington, DC internship for college age Korean Americans. The internships involve full time summer work in governmental and non-governmental offices four days a week and work within the Korean American community one day per week. In 2003, the interns worked with owners of small Korean shops on community relations issues - several had quite limited or no Korean language skills. KAC awarded five internships last year. The organization is hoping to increase that number slightly in 2004. Interns came from all around the United States and were very happy with both their work and social experience. The 2004 internship application will be posted on the KAC-DC web site before the end of January. Anyone who is interested should apply promptly as the deadline for application is likely to be March 31st.

KAC also has a mentorship program for at-risk Korean-American youth to help their intellectual and emotional development, counsel them about career and other life choices and provide access to practical experiences that might not otherwise be available to them. Mentors in this program promise to maintain regular contact with their "mentee". At present there are more trained mentors available than children requesting this service. Contact information is available at the KACDC web site.

Korean Pen-Pals

Check the website www.teenkorean.com if you would like to exchange emails with Korean teen pen-pals. Look for "Hi! E-Pal" content. This is a free service organized by Korean Overseas Foundation (President Kwang Kyu Lee). Other resources for learning Korean can also be found on this site - look for "Study Korean" and "Zoom-in Korea."

Many thanks to Grace Song of ASIA for sharing this information with us!

Hiking in Korea

by Mike LaBelle

I traveled to Korea in October 2003 and had opportunities to go hiking. I highly recommend it - but don't go with Koreans unless you are in good shape.

Seoul is surrounded by high mountains that offer many hiking possibilities within the city limits, a bit like Los Angeles in this respect. As you might expect, a city of 10 million people can produce a LOT of hikers on a nice day, especially when the starting points of many hikes are accessible from the subway. On a brilliant October weekend day, I hiked Namsan mountain with a Korean friend and a Korean American friend. The mountain is on the north side of Seoul and appears in any decent guidebook, along with hiking maps and directions from subway stations.

At the top, the leaves were just turning to fall color. Thousands of Koreans had turned out to celebrate the day by hiking the mountain. An "interesting" contrast with the U.S. (which became much more interesting as the day progressed) is that the trails in Korea go absolutely straight up the mountain. There are no switchbacks to make the climb more gradual. Hiking up is mostly like hiking up stairs, only sometimes there is quite a big stair in front of you. One time there was a thick rope to hold onto as you eased your way up. Hiking down, as any hiker knows, is easier on the heart but much harder on the knees. The descent was quite a challenge for me as the heavy use of these trails leaves many areas devoid of dirt in the trails; you just step from rock to rock.

Koreans take hiking very seriously, with many participating in technical climbing (including my Korean friend, but thankfully not with me). My little group took far fewer stops to simply enjoy the scenery than would be the case with American hikers. This was SERIOUS exercise for most folks who were out there that day. Some Koreans were decked out in Austrian climbing gear and unbelievably, a few did the entire hike barefoot.

The reward was magnificent views in all directions. It was frightening to realize that I was standing in Seoul and probably looking well into North Korea. In the other direction, you could see the entire city of Seoul spread out at your feet. Old city walls appeared at the very top of the mountain. We stopped at a beautiful Buddhist temple near the top of the mountain. It had very new and well-carved statues and nice buildings. Lunch was free (donations accepted) and was provided by Buddhist monks. It consisted of very basic soup. We cleaned and re-stacked our own dishes for the next hiker. When we got to the bottom, we immediately returned to the heart of the busy city—a sudden contrast; one that is pretty rare in the States. We enjoyed the rest of our day relaxing in a coffeehouse and rewarded ourselves with several hot cups of coffee.

Korean Authors

by Sophia Lee Hattery

On Saturday September 13, 2003, my family and I attended a program about Korean-American authors at the Smithsonian. Yangsook Choi, Linda Sue Park, An Na, Frances Park, and her sister Ginger Park were present to discuss both their lives and their books. They also autographed their books.

Linda Sue Park, the first author to speak, told us that on her first birthday, following the Korean tradition of picking an object that is supposed to symbolize one's future life, she chose a pencil, just as I did at my first birthday party. She has written a number of books, for example, Seesaw Girl (her first novel), A Single Shard, When My Name Was Keoko, and Kite Fighters. She also told us that her parents wanted her to speak only English at home.

An Na wrote A Step from Heaven, which is recommended mostly for teenagers. This book is about a girl who has recently immigrated to the United States from Korea, just as An Na herself had. Unlike Linda Sue Park's parents, her parents wanted her to speak only Korean at home.

Yangsook Choi is both an author and an illustrator. She wrote and illustrated The Name Jar about a girl who has moved from Korea to America. At the airport in Korea before she leaves for America, she is given a name stamp. At her new school in the U.S. she decides she wants an American name, but none seem to fit. Her class fills a jar with names to help her decide. She read out loud New Cat about a cat that lives in a tofu factory. The cat in that story is her real cat, but Ms. Choi created the story for her cat.

Frances and Ginger Park (also known as the Park Sisters) live in the Washington, D.C. area. They have written various books, including The Freedom Trip, which is about a girl who crossed a river that separates North Korea from South Korea. This story is based on their mom's experiences when she was a teenager. The Park Sisters also wrote Goodbye, 382 Shin Dang Dong, which Yangsook Choi illustrated. This book is based on the experience of their older sister, who left the family house at this address to immigrate to the United States with her parents. At this program the Park Sisters met Yangsook for the first time. Usually an author never meets the illustrator of the book.

I enjoyed the program because I got to meet famous Korean-American people. My favorite author was Yangsook Choi because she is both an illustrator and an author.

Editors Note: Sophia Hattery is in 4th grade and a member of KFAF.

KFAF Receives 2003 Bridge Builder Leadership Award

In October 2003, the Korean American Coalition, Washington DC chapter (KAC-DC), presented its 2003 Bridge Builder Leadership award to Korean Focus for Adoptive Families. The award was presented by KAC-DC board member Eva Chung and gratefully accepted by Korean Focus President Debbie Dalton and KFAF founder Margie Perscheid.

Ms. Chung told the audience of about 300 Korean-Americans and friends that "Korean Focus connects Korean culture with mainstream America. The heart of Korean Focus is to maintain and cultivate a support network between Korean culture, Korean-born adoptive children and their parents. Korean Focus is dedicated to guiding parents, children and their families towards an appreciation of the enriching, and vibrant qualities that Korean heritage has to offer." In their remarks accepting the award, Debbie and Margie stated that our membership has indeed been honored to become a part of the broad Korean American experience and delighted that we and our children have indeed benefited from this connection and have always felt embraced by the Korean-American community.

Korean Focus was happy to learn that the presentation of this award was widely covered by the DC area Korean language press and KF is continuing to partner with the broader DC Korean-American community in as many of our events as possible.



**Debbie Dalton and Margie Perscheid of KFAF
Receiving Award from Eva Chung of KAC**

KOREAN FOCUS FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

Membership Renewal



It's that time of year again; time to renew your KFAF membership! We have lots of exciting programs planned for the coming year. Join us and renew your membership. Please fill out the form below and send it with a check for \$25.00 made payable to Korean Focus for Adoptive Families to:

**Korean Focus for Adoptive Families
Attn: Margie Perscheid, Membership Coordinator
1906 Sword Lane
Alexandria, VA 22308**

Parent(s) names: _____

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Mom's work phone: _____ Dad's work phone: _____

Children's name(s) Birth Date(s)

Your member dues make it possible for Korean Focus to provide current and new programs. Korean Focus IS its member families. If you haven't already, please renew your membership for 2004.

The Teen Page

K-Pop: Korea's Contribution to Pop Music

K-Pop is short for Korean pop. The now commonly-used Korean term for this style of music is *Gayo*. Although *gayo* really means any music in the Korean language, it has become commonly used to refer simply to K-pop music and is short for *inky gayo*, or popular music.

So what is the big deal anyway? Well not only has Korean Pop Music become ever growingly popular in Korea, but it has been gaining much fame world wide as well. Korean Pop Singers, or *Gasooos* in Korean, are known for their unique and hip style of music. *Gasooos* take all kinds of music, especially from Western styles, and add their own twists and styles to it. If you go to Korea, you will see how wide spread these styles are. Every other kid can break dance, and most everyone wants to see the stars or even be a *Gasoo* themselves. The music combines all the great music from around the world and turns it into a spectacular form of art.



Shinhwa

K-Pop has a huge following in Korea and around the world. Websites like Kpopmusic.com, Solid07.net, and Kpopfans.com give them a place to read the latest news about their favorite artists, like Shinhwa and Baby Vox - among many many others. Some sites offer K-Pop albums for sale or live streams of K-Pop.

Korean Focus is planning a K-Pop night for teens in March. Plan on coming, it'll be a great opportunity to learn more about Korea's contribution to pop music!



Baby V.O.X

ASIA Saturday Culture School

The Adoption Service Information Agency (ASIA) will soon start its Spring Semester for Saturday Culture School. The ASIA Culture School offers families the chance to connect with Korean and Chinese heritage while interacting with other adoptive families.

Children enrolled in Culture School will learn traditional Asian arts and humanities including language, culture, music, and arts and crafts. Additionally, students participate in active activities including dance, outdoor games, and group field trips. This semester we will go to Annandale, Koreantown as our field trip and practice Korean skills during the trip.

For teens, adult adoptees, and adoptive parents, the school offers separate Korean language classes that

meet concurrently with the children's program. Chinese language class is offered at the ASIA MD office in different time on Saturday. There are also workshops on diverse topics. Teens, adults and adoptive parents may also enjoy serving as volunteers for the children's program. This is a great opportunity to interact with others in the Korean and adoption communities, and to help children adopted from Korea learn about their heritage. Teens may earn community service hours.

ASIA Culture School meets Saturday mornings at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 7009 Wilson Lane, Bethesda, MD 20817. The Spring 2004 semester runs dates are February 21- May 8, 2004. (No school during the Easter break). Tuition is \$150 per child student; \$100 per teen/adult student enrolling in the language class.

For more information, please contact Grace Song, Culture School Director, at (301) 587-7068 or via email at gsong@asia-adopt.org.

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