



Newsletter #9, June 2014

Grail Link to the UN Network  
Update on Grail and UFER

“Women working together to bring  
about a world of peace, justice,  
equity and renewal of the earth”



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**The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)** is an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. Thirteenth Session of the Permanent Forum **12-23 May 2014** The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues meets for 10 days each year, at UN Headquarters in New York. It is a high-level advisory body that deals with indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights.

**The 2014 Special Theme:** “Principles of good governance consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: articles 3 to 6 and 46” The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the General Assembly on Thursday, 13 September 2007, by a majority of 144 states in favor, 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States) and 11 abstentions (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burundi, Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Samoa and Ukraine). This decision comes as a result of more than twenty years of work by indigenous peoples and the United Nations system.

From Lillian Wall, New York Grail member and part of the GLUNN team: For two weeks the power, vision and the reality of the struggle and determination for sustainability was alive through the witness of citizens from the four corners of the earth. This was a personal reminder of the responsibility required as a resident /neighbor living in the "Global Village". Opportunities for personal contact and learning names and stories no matter how briefly is priceless. "Acting locally and thinking globally" makes sense in the interdependence of a global village. It has been said "when you listen to a witness, you become a witness". The importance of learning and acting in solidarity in response to the truths that are told from the "souls "of the people has been a life changing experience in conscience and consciousness!

The content and engagement is a journey of transformation and an adult experience sometimes known as "personal rites of passage". The importance of tradition, language, identity, sense of place, community, respect for the earth and gratitude to the divine and recognizing that all is sacred and revered.

Meetings and conversations included the following: \*Doctrine of Discovery \*Decolonization Dialogues \*Territorial Rights \*Self Determination \*Spirituality \*Environmental Challenges and Abuse \*Human Rights

The Four Recommendations for action at the UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples which will take place during the UN General Assembly 2014. "Indigenous Peoples ,their governments and representatives call upon the UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples to adopt the following measures: \*An Implementing Body for the UN Declaration \*Action to Combat Violence Against Native Women \*An Appropriate Status for Indigenous Peoples within the UN \*Action to Protect Rights to Religious and Cultural Sites

"Gentle breeze from the four corners of the earth, carry my prayers on your wings to the court of the most high God". Theology Brewed in an African Pot Lovingly & Gratefully, *Lillian Wall*

The **Bronx Grail Center** hosted original peoples from the Lakota Nation (Joann originally from Wounded Knee now from Nevada), Yamasi Peoples (Lori is from Georgia), Trique Tribe (Josefino from Oaxaca, Mexico), Huaorani Tribe (Moi from Ecuador), a lawyer who recently discovered he is a Mohawk and came helping Joann (Dave from Ohio). We introduce you to their tribes. Obviously this isn't extensive and maybe not even the most important things to share. But, if it whets your appetite to know more, google the tribe.

The **Trique** or **Triqui** are an indigenous people of Oaxaca, Mexico. They number around 23,000. The Trique language is Mixtecan. All Trique peoples are known for their distinctive woven huipiles, baskets, and morrales (handbags). Josefino gifted us with beautiful backpacks. Trique people live in a mountainous region, called "La Mixteca Baja", in the southwestern part of Oaxaca. The elevation within the Trique region varies between 1,500 - 3,000 m (4,921 - 9,843 feet) thus low-lying cumulus clouds envelop entire towns during the afternoons and evenings. As the average daily salary of a rural Oaxacan is less than \$5 (U.S.) and La Mixteca is the poorest region of Oaxaca, migration and remittances sent back to Oaxaca confer economic benefits to both migrant Triques and their families in Oaxaca. Trique women are more likely to remain in the Trique region and do not travel as often as Trique men do.

The **Huaorani (Waorani)** are hunters and gatherers who have lived in the Amazon Rainforest since before written history. The Huaorani are legendary, even among other Indigenous peoples in Ecuador's Amazon region, for their extensive knowledge about the rainforest and its diverse plant and animal life. They are also famous for their hunting skills, and long spears and blowguns. For centuries, Huaorani warriors—renowned and feared for their strength and ferocity—defended their ancestral territory from intrusions by outsiders who sought to exploit the Amazon Rainforest and conquer its inhabitants. Before “contact” (with the outside world) and the arrival of “the civilization” and first oil company, Texaco (now part of Chevron), the Yasuni Huaorani defended their territory with hardwood spears. Now, the “contacted” Huaorani communities in the Yasuni area must find new ways to protect *Ome*, the forest that is their home. A warrior for many years, Moi helped start an eco-lodge that brings income to the area while respecting nature. We sent Moi home with a big old suitcase filled with children's clothing.

**Yamasi People** are traveling on a path to recovery of the People, land, and culture. They are organizing to create opportunities for Yamasi and other Natives to gain access to food, health care, housing, education, and ecologically sound economic opportunities. All of these things depend on the land. Therefore working with their partner, Guale Nation, and other indigenous Peoples, they address water issues, carbon-reduction strategies, ecosystem health, human and animal habitat preservation, and the reduction of toxic use. Yamasi is a Itsate-Creek word meaning "offspring of Yama" or "speakers of the Yama language." It was a political alliance in SE Georgia and southern South Carolina, formed to resist Native American slave raiders coming out of SW Virginia and NE Tennessee. Lori has been here before. She was a big force behind the side event: CAN'T STOP THE WATER which UFER and The Grail co-sponsored.

### **Lakota Indians**

The Lakotas are a tribal Native America group that resides in the northern part of the United States. Their primary location is in South Dakota and North Dakota. They speak the Lakota language, a dialect of the Sioux tribal group.

Today, there are only about 70,000 registered Lakota Indians. While living within the boundaries of the reservation, the Lakota Indians are governed by their own set of laws. Hence, the tribal group has a separate political system, police department, education system, etc. The Lakota Indians have strong cultural and spiritual ties. For the most part, the Indians strive to preserve their way of life. From youth, parents train their children in the values and morals of their tribal group. The day before Joann Spotted Bear spoke at the UN, she went to our garden to pray (Sharon and Lori are there too). She had to feel the earth under her feet.

*Below Sharon and Lori are with Joann Spotted Bear as she was asking Creator God to be with her as spoke up at the UN for her peoples' rights.*



**Mohawk** Original to the state of New York, the Mohawk Indians are a group of Native American Indians that are a part of the larger Iroquois Confederation also called the Haudenosaunee. Compared to other Iroquois tribes, the Mohawk people are unique in their appearance, customs, and rituals. The Haudenosaunee were made up of five nations: the Mohawk, the Oneida, the Cayuga, the Onondaga, and the Seneca. The Mohawk were particularly skilled at the art of beadwork and porcupine quill artistry, which is unique to North American Indians. The sacred art of mask carving, however, is an art form that held special meaning to the Mohawk. Elaborate masks were designed and used solely in religious ceremonies and not often seen by outsiders. Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, informally known as Lily of the Mohawks (1656 --1680), was canonized a Catholic saint in 2012.



The Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20

**UN Women has just launched an epic campaign, and we want you to be a part of it.** Empowering Women – Empowering Humanity: Picture It! Here’s why. September 1995: 189 governments, 17,000 participants and 30,000 activists came together to adopt the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It was the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing women’s rights and gender equality. It agreed on concrete steps to create a world where each woman and girl could exercise her freedoms and choices, and realize all her rights, such as to live free from violence, to go to school, to participate in decisions and to earn equal pay for equal work. The year 2015 will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this historic agreement, but gender equality is a distant dream still.

That’s why UN Women is launching “Empowering Women – Empowering Humanity: Picture It!” – a global campaign that’s asking each of us to imagine a world where gender equality and women’s empowerment is a reality, and to play our part to make it happen. We are counting on you to make #Beijing20 count for women and girls everywhere.

**Visit <http://beijing20.unwomen.org> and find out how you can Picture It!**



25<sup>th</sup> of every month....  
wear orange.

I don’t particularly like the color orange but last November I put an orange scarf on my Christmas list. Why? Well, even though in past GLUNN newsletters we’ve discussed the importance of the UNiTE campaign and we should all wear something orange on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month, I didn’t do it. The 25<sup>th</sup> of November I attended a session at the UN which featured a powerful theatrical piece: WOUNDED TO DEATH—a series of monologues by women victims of domestic violence read by well-known international personalities. The monologues were like letters from the grave as each of the women were dead. Let us all wear something orange every 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.



**The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign joins the Women Peacemakers Program's social media campaign: *Gender & Militarism: Analyzing the Linkages to Strategize for Peace!***

Recognizing the critical role militarism plays in perpetuating gender-based violence, the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign will continue with the theme of “From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let’s Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!” The priority areas for 2014 are: 1) Violence Perpetrated by State Actors; 2) Proliferation of Small Arms in Cases of Intimate Partner Violence; and 3) Sexual Violence During and After Conflict.

The text of the theme, as well as PDF and Word downloads in English, Spanish, and French, are available on the website: <http://16dayscswgl.rutgers.edu/2014-campaign/2014-theme-announcement>.

The team will be working to develop the additional Take Action Kit materials in the next few weeks and hope to begin posting them by late August.



L-R Adline Sarpong (Bronx), Carolina Pinto Basto (Portugal), Anastasia Cavazos (Michigan), Olivia Robbins (Manhattan), McKalya Menyah (Bronx), Paloma Matusse (Mozambique), Diana Eusebio (Bronx)

Excerpt from the CSW-58 report: This year The Grail and UFER co-sponsored and organized two side events. One event was presented by girls (between 14 and 18 years old) and 1 young woman (21 years old) that came from different countries to mention from México, Mozambique, Portugal and USA and the title was: Walking on the Edge of Change: Girls voices and life learning experience towards achieving the MDGs

In this event girls had the opportunity to present their experiences as activists in the achievement of MDGs. The panelists addressed issues of MDGs in their communities, schools and among their peers and they gave testimony to the issues and their work. The impressive panel of young women (pictured above) spoke eloquently about the challenges facing women and girls who seek equality.

**Adline** (10<sup>th</sup> grade/Academy Mt. St. Ursula) served as moderator.

**Carolina** (21 years old) of Portugal manifest activism in her work with The Girl Effect that takes a one to one, girl to girl approach.

**Anastasia** (16 year old from Flint, Michigan) discussed the challenges facing her community and about building a passion for education among girls.

Olivia (9<sup>th</sup> grade/Manhattan) gave an impressive summary of many of the statistics of inequality impacting women and girls and asked a powerful question: "How do we reach people who won't accept the facts?"

**McKayla** (9<sup>th</sup> grade/Academy Mt. St. Ursula) A Bronx student began and ended our session speaking her own poetry and a favorite: A Woman.

**Paloma** (18 years old) of Mozambique shared about her efforts advocating for girls rights in school and community.

**Diana** (11<sup>th</sup> grade) from the Bronx, who was born in Mexico, is a leader organizing among the undocumented community, especially youth. She is a Girl Advocate with the Working Group on Girls.

See June 2014 CROSSROADS for sharing about CSW-58. The Final Report will soon be available on the International website.

The 59<sup>th</sup> session of the CSW is tentatively scheduled for 9-20 March 2015.

The Commission will undertake a review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20 years after its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The session will also address current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action, as well as opportunities for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda. The review will be conducted at national, regional and global levels.

Start thinking now if: 1) you would like to attend, 2) you know of a young Grail woman who could possibly be an intern. Here are a few of the intern requirements. Write to Mary Kay if you want the complete description and application:

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- Be more than 21 and less than 30 years old
- Can speak and understand and read English
- Has good communication, planning, facilitating, and computer skills
- Has experience working with youth
- Is part of the Grail work in her home country.

