

## **MY JOURNAL MORE MUSINGS ON THE HIGHWAY OF MY LIFE**

This journal is my unofficial history of the *Iowa United Nations Association* (Iowa UNA) wrapped around my personal life. It is simply an account of moments, memories filtered through time, my own consciousness and my failure to record most of my life.

In dividing time, I had to discern beginnings and endings. It has become stolen mismatched pieces in my effort to share memorable moments during my work with the Iowa UNA over the past 50 years. This history includes my personal experiences on the highway of my life, enabling me to also share my history with my children, my family, my friends and generations to come.

The Iowa UNA began in 1953. At the invitation of the late Dorothy Schramm (Burlington), Eleanor Roosevelt brought our charter to Des Moines (Iowa). Several local chapters were soon established across the state by Schramm who also served as President and founding member of the Burlington UNA Chapter. Schramm, a Republican, later became the first Iowa UNA General Chair. Her husband, James Schramm, then served as state chair of the Iowa Republican Party.

UNA-USA (known as the American Association for the United Nations until 1964) is a national organization dedicated to strengthening the United Nations and enhancing United States participation in international institutions. The vision of the Iowa UNA is to create a globally engaged Iowa. We work to build a vocal constituency in Iowa for constructive U.S. leadership in the UN system for the benefit of Iowans and people everywhere.

**1953** - I married David M. Paul, MD, a Boston native, who was employed at the Albany Veterans Administration Hospital (VAH) as the Assistant Chief, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service (PMRS). In 1954, we moved to Iowa City, Iowa. My husband became the Chief, PMRS, when a VA Hospital opened there. He also joined the faculty at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC). Our two children were born in Iowa City, Phillip in 1954 and Elizabeth (Liz) in 1957. Another daughter, Marlene M. Preston, Associate Professor and Assistant Department Head, Department of Communication, Virginia Tech (VA) did not live with us in Iowa City, but

our relationship continues today as it expands and grows. Marlene and her husband, Edward Preston, have three children: Edward Channing, Katherine Preston Keeney and James Patton.

**1964** - Iowa UNA coordinated the first annual *Model United Nations* at the University of Northern Iowa (Cedar Falls). In 1969 the first annual *Iowa Youth Symposium on the United Nations* was held at the State Capitol in Des Moines. Over these many years, these two programs have educated approximately 36,000 Iowa High School students on the work of the United Nations and how global issues affect their lives in Iowa.

**1965** - My involvement with the Iowa UNA began as a volunteer for the *UNICEF Greeting Card Program*. Iowa UNA board member, Leila Young, (Oelwein) was the first person to sell UNICEF cards in Iowa from her home and at every Iowa UNA board meeting. Many years later, together with Otilie Blodi (Iowa City), we set up UNICEF sales in downtown Iowa City locations that often reached total yearly sales of over \$20,000.

**1973** - I enrolled in a University of Iowa program, Women's Institute for Community Leadership, taught by Professor Eleanor Anstey, a faculty member in the UI School of Social Work. Today, I credit Eleanor Anstey, who became my mentor and close friend, for any and all professional accomplishments achieved in my life.

**1973** - I was among the many Iowans who participated in the Iowa UNA *Planetary Citizenship Campaign* attesting that, in addition to being a United States citizen, we were world citizens to emphasize our connections with the world's peoples. A world citizenship film, *The Unclaimed Birthright*, was also produced by Iowa UNA.

In the 1970's when both children left for Colorado College. Colorado Springs (Colorado), I enrolled at the UI to complete an undergraduate degree begun at Russell Sage College (Albany) in the 1950's. In 1983, while a student in a Famous American Women class, I wrote a required lengthy paper about the women in my family titled, "A Vivencia for Three Generations of Women in My Family: Victims of Change and Time." In 1984, I was granted a Master's Degree in American Studies concentrating on Third World Women in the United States. My American Studies degree helped me answer my overriding question: "How was I indoctrinated to believe the United States is the No. 1 country in the world?"

**1977** - I received a National UNA-USA Citation in recognition of public service in support of the United Nations. Former UN Ambassador Andrew Young presented this award at a UNA-USA conference in New York.

**1979** - I accepted the position of Executive Director, Iowa UNA, a position I held for 20 years. Our first Iowa UNA office was opened in Old Brick in Iowa City.

**1979** - Together with my husband, David, and my sister, Shirley Bouleris (New York), I attended the graduation ceremonies of daughter, Liz, at Colorado College. Liz was the television reporter covering this event. After graduation, Liz accepted employment with the Leo Burnett Advertising Agency (Chicago) and later moved to Mexico City, becoming the office manager. Subsequently, she became the manager of the British-based J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency (Mexico City).

**1980** - After the *Decade for Women* was declared by the United Nations (1976-1985), I attended the *UN Mid-Decade for Women's Conference* in Copenhagen, Denmark with close Iowa City friends, Eleanor Anstey and Mary Anne Volm, Director of the United Way in Johnson County, Iowa.

When we checked housing facilities at a Copenhagen hostel, we discovered signs alerting us to thieves on the premises. Volm then visited the bathing facilities and found nude men and women showering together. Feeling that different housing would be more appropriate, we located a hotel in the Red Light District of Copenhagen. This location offered us the opportunity to observe local prostitutes sitting in windows to encourage customers and to visit the numerous interesting sex shops located in this district.

During the middle of the night, an explosion happened in a nearby harbor. Rushing to the lobby, we found a heavy German man in his underwear speaking to his tour group. Unable to discover what had happened due to language barriers, Mary Anne suggested we jump in the river imitating what residents did during the Chicago fire. Eleanor and I refused. We questioned if the Palestinian delegation that had marched in the streets earlier in that day to publicly display their disappointment with the conference proceedings were responsible for the explosion. When we returned to the conference the next day, we discovered that an exploding grain elevator that night was

responsible. We then spent a large portion of our time tearing down conference posters featuring the United States in a negative light.

But I was fortunate to meet two Japanese women at the conference who survived the 1944 United States atomic bombings in Japan. They were promoting the book *Hiroshima-Nagasaki: A Record of the Atomic Bomb*. Even though the women shared that they were facing death because of their exposure to atomic radiation, they now were traveling the world to make people aware that atomic bombs should never be dropped again on the world's peoples.

The gift poster they gave me featured a young Japanese woman with a disfigured face carrying a rice ball. Translation of the Japanese characters on the posters revealed this message: "This day cannot be forgotten. The testimony of the 35th year. The number of people in this generation that do not want war is increasing. Right now we would like to convey the record of the bombing to children and the world. *Hiroshima- Nagasaki: A Record of the Atomic Bomb* is our message to the peoples of the world, a message of peace."

**1982** - *War and Peace and Iowa*, a four-part research study of the development of the American and Soviet nuclear arsenals to their capability of mutual assured destruction and whether Iowans derive economic benefits from defense spending, was published by Iowa UNA, in cooperation with the Iowa Physicians for Social Responsibility, and the Consortium on International Peace and Reconciliation, a ten-denomination partnership of Iowa churches. James N. Murray, UI Professor of Political Science, was the study editor. James Gannon, editor of the Des Moines Register, recognized this study in a Register editorial.

The *Iowa Peace Directory* included in this study was described by then Governor Robert D. Ray as..."we like to look ahead and to be on the cutting edge of change. ....our friendly people, our colorful landscape, and our progressive communities...a place to grow. It is. And the peace movement in Iowa is growing."

**1982** - I was invited to present a program on Hiroshima-Nagasaki at the Newman Catholic Student Center (Iowa City). During the final stages of World War II, the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima (August 8, 1945) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1945). For

the United States and Japanese victims of this World War II, the mind knows no time. It happened yesterday.

Because I believe that personal stories define one's humanity, I am sharing some of my experiences related to Hiroshima-Nagasaki happenings that have contributed to my becoming a person who now asks: "When will the violence end?"

I remember when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the day we dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima – an estimated 70,000 died immediately from the explosion and another 50,000 died from radiation within five years. On August 9, Nagasaki was bombed, killing another 40,000. Japan surrendered the next day. It was a day of rejoicing in the United States. Our troops would now come home. About 70,000 more people died in Nagasaki by the end of that year. No questions were asked about the morality of this decision, making us the first nation to drop atomic bombs on other people, a record still standing today.

My husband, David M. Paul, MD, served with General George Patton and the Allied forces in Europe during World War II. David's unit was being readied to be shipped to Japan in 1945. He strongly believed that many American lives were saved by these A-bombs. He was furious with me for accepting the Newman Catholic Student Center invitation.

His reaction made me even more aware that we are all a product of our experiences and victims of the socialization provided by our respective cultures. Our experiences obviously differed. After meeting Japanese women victims of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki nuclear radiation at the 1980 *UN Mid-Decade for Women* conference in Copenhagen, I viewed an exhibit at the United Nations of partially-destroyed statuary and a series of photographic panels of the destruction of Hiroshima-Nagasaki.

I also did extensive research on Robert Oppenheimer, the "father of the atomic bomb." My research included his visit with President Truman when he requested that the A-bomb program be discontinued to avoid the destruction of the planet. Truman threw Oppenheimer out of his office, refused to see him again, and continued the program. Oppenheimer later died a broken and politically destroyed man.

I was also involved with a Hiroshima-Nagasaki exhibit at the UI Libraries featuring a photograph of a bus, with the statement that when the A-bomb was dropped, the people inside were incinerated. Only their shadows remained imprinted on the bus walls. I question today if it is our destiny to live in a world where more and more nations possess these ultimate tools of destruction?

**1984** - The *Iowa Peace Directory 1984* with 100 plus entries was edited by Susan J. McGuire and available for general distribution to Iowa public libraries.

**1984** - On to the *U.N. Second Disarmament Conference*, (New York City), again traveling with Eleanor Anstey and Mary Anne Volm. We were offered housing on the floor of Riverside Church. Mary Anne consistently questioned why we were not staying at a real hotel and sleeping in actual beds? Eleanor and I responded that we felt we were fortunate to even have housing as the city hotels were overbooked with conference participants.

We also scheduled a visit to the nearby Ethical Culture Society where we found other Japanese women who had also survived atomic radiation, presenting the same message that the Japanese women did in Copenhagen.

At a conference reception, I was astonished to discover that I was seated next to the Japanese author of *Hiroshima-Nagasaki: A Record of the Atomic Bomb*.

Invited to a Roosevelt Island celebration one evening, Mary Anne questioned why we were the only women present and why all the men were dancing with one another. "How lucky we are to be included," was my response.

These opportunities also enabled me to reconnect with the Japanese Buddhists who had traveled across the United States on foot to publicly promote the conference. When they stopped in Iowa City, I made arrangements for them to have free housing in the Old Brick building where the Iowa UNA office is located. When the Buddhists arrived, they had been joined by American Indians and a growing group of supportive walkers. The Buddhist group organizer told me that I was now responsible for finding food for this growing number!

**1984** - My son, Phillip, after graduating from Colorado College (1976), and receiving a Master's degree in Engineering from the University of Iowa, was awarded a PhD in engineering at Stanford University. He was then employed at the Sandia Nuclear Facilities. Together, with three engineering friends, they found a venture capitalist willing to invest a large financial commitment to create Eksigent Technologies, an engineering company in Silicon Valley. When Eksigent was sold to a multinational several years later, Phillip frequently traveled to Singapore to set up a factory at that location for the new owners.

**1985** - Together with Eleanor Anstey, I attended *the UN Decade for Women Wrap-Up Conference* in Nairobi (Kenya). Without notice, we were thrown out of our downtown Nairobi hotel rooms and transported to a former Mau Mau internment camp located far outside the city. Later we later learned U.S. women conference participants were moved there by the Kenyan government in an effort to prevent the women from creating public demonstrations in Nairobi's downtown district.

We were invited to visit a nearby village to view the chickens that the village women had raised. When we arrived, no women were visible because the village men had appropriated this honor. We found the chicken pens empty and learned that the women had sold the chickens.

I also met some South African women who had walked to Nairobi to attend their very first conference. They planned to return to South Africa and share the information they learned in Nairobi with their sisters living in nearby villages.

One of the workshops I attended was organized by Anstey and titled "Pesticide Usage in Iowa." Earlier, Anstey had received her PhD degree at the University of Iowa on this topic. In her workshop, Anstey shared her research that included interviewing over 100 Iowa farm families. She discovered that Iowa farm women were washing their husband's heavily contaminated pesticide clothing with the family laundry.

At her own expense, Anstey reduced her PhD thesis to comic book form to enable her to share this information with attending African women who were distributing pesticides with their hands.

Another poster then came into my possession featuring a burka clad Afghanistani woman with this message: "Get Up – Stand Up." The poster featured Article 2 of the *UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights* which entitles everyone to be free of discrimination. The *United Nations Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* tells governments how to fulfill this promise to end discrimination against women. In Taliban-held areas of Afghanistan, women can rarely work outside the home. Girls can attend only same sex schools. And women can be beaten for not wearing the veil.

Other Iowa participants in the Nairobi conference included Dorothy Schramm (Burlington), Ruth Muir (Iowa City) and Janet Wetzel, Director, UI School of Social Work.

**1985** - When we returned to Iowa, we produced over 30 statewide grassroots programs on the *UN Decade for Women Wrap-Up Conference*. These programs were followed by "Women Hold Up Half the Sky: Vision and Voices for the 1990s" a statewide Iowa UNA conference held in Des Moines which attracted a broad cross-section of Iowa and international women. Two mid-wives from Mexico returned to Iowa City with us. While in Iowa City, Iowa UNA Intern, Victor Arango, arranged for the women to visit the Iowa City Emma Goldman Clinic and participate in other local feminist activities. "Women Hold Up Half the Sky: Vision and Voices for the 1990s" was funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Iowa Humanities Board, The Stanley Foundation and many other co-sponsoring organizations.

**1987** - I was a member of "A Feisty Feminist Mid-Summer Tour to China" organized by Meg Bowman, a sociology professor at San Jose State College (CA). None of the Chinese women I met were feminists. All were indoctrinated to be housewives and to report to the government any suspicious anti-government activity by their neighbors. While traveling by trains with no air conditioning from Beijing to another city in China, our uninhibited tour leader stripped to the waist. Lines of Chinese men passing her compartment continued to grow until train officials officially ended their parade.

**1980's** - Served as Project Director for the following Iowa Humanities Board funded programs:

- 1983-84 - *The United Nations on Trial in a Nuclear World  
The Management of Global Change*
- 1985-86 - *Human Rights in the Global Community*
- 1987-88 - *Facing the Global Challenge:  
Professional Ethics in the Global Community*

“The Management of Global Change” was Iowa UNA’s first international conference held May 4-5, 1984 at the Five Seasons Hotel in Cedar Rapids. This conference explored solutions for the increasing insecurity in today’s nuclear world and the challenges of rapid change for concerned peoples in our global society. It offered an unprecedented opportunity to engage in dialogue in Iowa on complex international issues that affect individuals at the grassroots level and also offered alternate strategies for global security and peaceful change. The conference built on dialogue initiated at 11 community forums held earlier in 1983-84 and were sponsored by Humanities Iowa, The Stanley Foundation and Iowa UNA “The United Nations on Trial in a Nuclear World.”

Brian F. Urquhart, Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs at the United Nations, gave the opening address, “The United Nations on Trial in a Nuclear World.” WFUNA representatives included Marek Haggmayer (Yugoslavia) WFUNA Secretary-General; Malcolm Harper, Director, UNA of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Firdaus James Kharas, Executive Director, UNA of Canada; and Sonia B. Lawson, UNA of Jamaica.

**1990** - While living in Mexico for some 13 years, daughter Liz met and married her husband, Jorge Quero, a Mexico City engineer who owned a factory in Mexico City and later one in Toluca, Mexico.

Their wedding celebration in Valle de Bravo, 90 miles west of Mexico City, was in a village on a mountain slope overlooking a large man-made lake. The village can only be reached by a paved but mountainous side road. Travel there is risky business during the rainy season.

My son, Phillip, and my sister, Shirley Fischer, who served as their Matron of Honor, and her husband, Bill Fischer (Schnectady), were the only members of my family attending. But Liz’s Iowa City grade school classmate, Bill Forker, now living in Santa Barbara (California), did attend. They were joined by some 40 other Norteamericanos who helped complete the more than 156 others on the wedding guest list.

Present were Jorge's parents, Bertha and Rogelio Quero, their two daughters, Andriana and Alejandra, as well as numerous members of their Mexican extended family. Earlier on a flight to Mexico City, Phil met Liz's friend, the owner of a Napa Valley winery, who stood with a bottle of champagne and asked: "Who's going to Liz's wedding?"

When performing the wedding ceremony, the Justice of the Peace told Liz and Jorge that if they did not have any children to do the best they could with one another.

When I returned home, on December 10, 1990, the Iowa City Press-Citizen, printed my full page article, "A Marriage Made in Mexico – Mother Tells About Journey South of Border to See Daughter Tie Knot." In the article's conclusion, I wrote: "As our plane departed, I realized once again that my adventurous daughter had taught me another invaluable lesson --the simple fact that I should have gone without shoes more often in my life. But I also left with new awareness that the life she and her new husband face in Mexico City was far removed in space and time than my father could have ever possibly envisioned in his wildest dreams while sitting on his old front porch."

Following the wedding, Liz and Jorge lived in Mexico City and built a home in the vacation community of Valle de Bravo, a town located close to the home of the monarch butterflies. I found this information in Wikipedia: "Some of the monarchs travel to Iowa each year arriving at the Mexican Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve in late October. They make winter homes in the tops of trees high in the mountains of the reserve located 62 miles northwest of Mexico City in the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt pine oak region on the borders of Michoacan and Mexican states.

The reserve hosts the majority of over-wintering monarchs from Eastern North America. The preserve remains predominately rural. Reserve administrators continue to be concerned with the deleterious effects of illegal logging and tourism. Conservation efforts sometimes conflict with the interests of local farmers, community-based landowners, private land owners and indigenous people."

Since 1990, the monarch population has declined by 90% in part because of deforestation in the butterflies' wintering grounds in Mexico and the

disappearance of native milkweed plants on their journey to the United States. At times when the monarchs return, Mexican policemen patrol the highways insisting that drivers travel at much lower speeds to avoid killing the butterflies.

Why include the monarch butterflies in this journal? Because they are us!

**1990-94** – A “United Kingdom-Iowa Transatlantic Dialogue” I initiated was formalized. This “twinning” program was with the North Eastern Region-United Kingdom, and North Ireland UNA, members of the World Federation of UN Associations (WFUNA). The program resulted in the exchange of materials, ideas and transatlantic visits between the UNA-UK and Iowa UNA. In 1996 I attended the WFUNA Regional Conference of European UNAs at Selly Oaks College, Birmingham, UK.

**1991** - The Iowa City Human Rights Commission recognized me with their award for an Individual Serving in a Service Organization. In 2006, I received the Iowa City Human Rights Commission Isabel Turner Award for my work with the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights (UICHR) on human rights locally and globally as well as my work on the Human Right to a Clean Environment (Third Generation of Human Rights). I am the only Iowa Citian on record to receive two awards from the Iowa City Human Rights Commission.

**1992** - Before the *1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development* was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, we organized a *UNA Midwest Public Hearing on Environment and Development* that was held at the State Capitol (Des Moines). This three-day preparatory international conference on environmental issues included speakers from Zambia, Indonesia, Argentina and Canada. The featured speakers were Maurice Strong, the UN Secretary General for the 1992 Rio conference, U.S. Senator Edward Muskie and former US Vice-President, Al Gore, who presented a series of informational posters on climate change issues. More than a few years later, “An Inconvenient Truth,” his production of a documentary on climate disruption included these posters. Iowa scholars, business persons, politicians, activists and heads of Iowa grassroots organizations also participated.

A paid hotel room was arranged for our two UNA interns, Victor Arango and Kay Powers, to attend the pre-Rio Des Moines conference. On arrival, Powers told me that she was concerned that their room contained only one

double bed. When the conference ended, all participants were asked to share what environmental issue they planned to work on when they returned home, Arango's response was "Last night when I was sleeping in the bathtub...."

The continuing involvement of Iowa UNA intern, Victor Arango, in educating the public on the Rio conference resulted in his creation of three national teleconferences -- Washington, DC, New York City and Iowa City - - cosponsored by the Iowa UNA and the National Wildlife Foundation. Following these activities, Arango and Powers traveled with me and 30 other Iowans to attend the 1992 Rio conference. After I shared with Dorothy Schramm the exceptional work that Arango and Powers had accomplished on Earth Summit issues, she sent a \$5,000 check to cover their Rio expenses. En route to Rio, Powers confided that she had packed 30 pairs of underwear!

**1992** - World attention was focused on the *U.N. Conference on Environment and Development* (UNCAD), commonly known as the Earth Summit, held June 7-14, 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Iowa Earth Summit participants included the late Iowa Senator Minnette Doderer, the late Burns H. Weston, UI Professor of Law, and Jerald Schnoor, Co-Director, UI Center for Global and Regional Environmental Studies; Katy Hansen, Dorothy Paul, Kay Powers and Alisa Meggit (all Iowa City); Dorothy Schramm from Burlington and Victor Arango from Colombia.

I was an official UNA observer to the Rio non-governmental conference. My press pass from the Iowa City Press-Citizen permitted me to attend all conference press briefings. One briefing provided interviews of Rio street children. This was before the government removed the children to a location far away from downtown Rio in an effort to clean up the city for the thousands of international visitors attending the conference.

I also attended a workshop featuring Ted Turner and his then wife Jane Fonda. They shared factual information about how poor people living in the United States end up living in unsafe environmental areas. Turner later contributed \$1 billion to the United Nations to create the United Nations Foundation that continues today to work on environmental and other global issues. On returning home, Iowa UNA organized over 25 statewide programs on the Rio conference.

**1993** - *Beyond Rio: Earth Charter Iowa* brought these issues home to Iowa. This program was designed to:

- examine the responsibilities in ethical decision-making inherent in the relationship between the individual, the community and the natural environment;
- explore the near and long term implications of Earth Summit agreements for sustainable development at the local, regional, national and international levels;
- provide a vision beyond Rio in *Earth Charter Iowa: A Plan of Action to the Year 2000*.

In addition to Iowa UNA, this project was supported by Humanities Iowa, The Stanley Foundation, and numerous other co-sponsoring organizations.

A portion of a letter from Governor Terry R. Branstad included in *Earth Charter Iowa* follows:

“As Governor, I am pleased to congratulate and encourage Iowans for our accomplishments and our goals for an environment that makes Iowa a better place to live, work and raise a family.

The *Earth Charter Iowa*, sponsored by the Iowa United Nations Association, is helping to develop an environmental ethic among Iowans, to document progress toward a cleaner environment and to set goals with recommendations to protect our environment, which encourages economic development.”

Today, climate change remains high on my activist agenda. I believe that we are killing the earth and must apologize to the children of the world who are trusting us to protect their home. People around the world need to work together to ensure the survival of civilization because the laws of nature won't change. Not in this world or any other.

Scientists say we've entered a new geological age, called the Anthropocene, owing to humanity's effect on the environment. Ninety-seven percent of the world's peer reviewed climate scientists warn that we will reach a “tipping point” before the end of this century. A climate shift and global warming will become unstoppable due to glacier and snow melt, oceans warming, loss

of permafrost, and crop coverage, all of which put more carbon dioxide and methane gas into the atmosphere.

Before his death and during a recent Iowa UNA conference on climate change held in Des Moines, Burns H. Weston said: “As for climate change in Iowa, for years I have been telling people that Iowa’s climate in about 30 years will be like Mississippi’s. Unless we develop some heat resistant kernel, good-bye corn, welcome cotton.”

**1995** - I received the UNA-USA Arnold Goodman award at its national convention in San Francisco for creating a world-class program linking UNA-USA with other non-governmental organizations, public officials, the media and educational institutions throughout the State of Iowa and the region.

**1995** - The *Iowa Declaration* was authored by Katy Hansen, Iowa UNA. It reads: “We the people of the United Nations and citizens of the world, Having met in Iowa City, Iowa, from 12 to 14 April 1995, and at other times proceeding to celebrate the future of the United Nations on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.” This declaration was included in the Aspirational Documents section of the five volume *International Law and World Order: Basic Documents* published by Transnational Publishers, Inc., New York, and in the *Congressional Record*. (Katy Hansen originally joined our Iowa UNA Board of Directors representing the Iowa Peace Corps Association. She later became Iowa UNA President).

**1995** - I was Iowa UNA’s official observer to the *UN Fourth World Conference on Women* in Beijing (China). Again, I had an Iowa City Press-Citizen pass enabling me to not only attend all press briefings, but send a daily report for publication to my local newspaper. I was in the audience when Hillary Clinton shared what was to become her well-known statement “Women’s Rights are Human Rights.” The Chinese government did not permit any Chinese women to attend this session. I also served as a panelist in a UNA-USA sponsored workshop, “American Women and International Concerns” to discuss the commonalities that Iowa women have with women globally.

**1995** - Together with Jael Silliman from India, Ellen Dorsey from Iowa City, and Julie Anne Fischel from Cedar Rapids, an Iowa UNA intern, we initiated successful efforts for the City of Iowa City to endorse at the

grassroots level the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*. This convention is an international bill of rights for women which was adopted by the United Nations in 1979. CEDAW, addressing problems faced by women globally as well as in the United States, was signed by President Jimmy Carter in 1979 and submitted for ratification in 1980. Today, 37 years later, it remains unratified by Congress.

Where are they today? Professor Jael Silliman resigned from the UI Women's Studies Program, became the Ford Foundation Director (NYC) on women's global issues, returned to India and now is a novelist. Ellen Dorsey today is the Executive Director of the Wallace Global Fund, a private foundation in Washington, DC focusing on environmental stability, corporate accountability, women's rights and social justice. Julie Anne Fischel, a UI Law School graduate, is now employed by a Southwest Indian reservation and has represented the reservation at the United Nations.

**1996** - The *UN Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II)* in Istanbul, (Turkey). I participated in an Iowa UNA sponsored workshop, "Poverty in the Heartland," organized by Katy Hansen, Iowa UNA, to explore how urbanization and our interdependent global economy have made Iowa more alike than different from the developing world. Iowa happenings included rural to urban migration, the loss of small family farms, and more women and children living in poverty.

**1999** - After serving 20 years as the Iowa UNA Executive Director, I resigned my paid position to become the first unpaid Executive Director of the University of Iowa Center for Human rights (*UICHR*). The Center was organized by the late Burns H. Weston, UI Professor of Law and a member of the Iowa UNA Board of Directors, the late Rex Honey, UI Professor of Geography, Eugenia T. Croscheck, Associate Director, UI Sponsored Programs, and myself. This Center grew from the programming efforts of "Global Focus: Human Rights '98," created and led by Weston to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the *UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights* adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948. Today, I am a member of the UICHR's Advisory Committee. Iowa UNA also works closely with UICHR on numerous human rights programs.

UICHR's mission is to promote and protect human rights at home and abroad by providing distinguished multidisciplinary leadership in human

rights research, education and public service to the University of Iowa, its surrounding communities, the State of Iowa, and beyond.

Together with Weston, a worldwide recognized expert on climate change, human rights and intergenerational justice, I shared one desk and one telephone in a small office to begin the operation of UICHR. Our modest budget of \$30,000 was supplied by the University of Iowa. Within a year UICHR received a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. Other grants followed from the U.S. Department of Justice, Humanities Iowa, the HKH Foundation (NYC), the Adam Lewis Foundation (Cleveland) and The Stanley Foundation. All of these grants then produced over \$2 million in funding for UICHR.

This new income enabled UICHR to hire their first paid Executive Director, Chivy Sok, a native of Cambodia, who had served as a child soldier during the reign of Pol Pot. When I asked Chivy what would have happened to her had she remained in Cambodia. “I would have become a prostitute.” Chivy said.

**2001** - Together with Weston, we initiated a new UICHR program, “One Community One Book – Johnson County Reads.” After public meetings were held to enable residents to discuss each selected book emphasizing human rights issues, the authors were invited to Iowa City.

Authors included Khaled Hosseini – *The Kite Runner* (Hosseini today is a Goodwill Envoy to the *UN High Commissioner for Refugees*, the *UN Refugee Agency* and the founder of The Khaled Hosseini Foundation, a nonprofit that provides humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan); T. C. Boyle – *The Tortilla Curtain*, exploring the lives of illegal immigrants in California; and Julie Otsuka – *When the Emperor was Divine*, a book exploring the experiences of Japanese Americans living in California who lost all of their possessions when they were sent to U.S internment camps during World War II. When I asked T.C. Boyle’s wife why he continued to always wear high red shoes, she replied: “He is still living in the 60’s.” I continued to organize this program from 2001 to 2006. The program, renamed, “One Community, One Book,” continues successfully today.

**2001** - Iowa UNA presented me with their highest award, the Scroll of Honor for significant contributions to world peace and international understanding in Iowa.

**2002 – 2004** - Iowa UNA coordinated a local “Spring Walk for Women in Afghanistan,” a program initiated by the *U.S. Committee for the UN Development Fund for Women* (UNIFEM/USA) to support actions to eliminate violence against women and girls.

But with a deteriorating Mexican economy in the 2000’s, Liz and Jorge moved with their two children, Sara and Nico, to Pleasanton, California. Liz accepted a position in the Amazon Advertising Agency (San Francisco) owned by a former Leo Burnett (Chicago) advertising friend. At that point in time, only the agency’s receptionist was male.

After many years of visiting Mexico during the 13 years their family lived there and discovering the tradition of women’s altars in family homes, I decided to create my own in Iowa. Women’s altars are not male-determined or dogma-bound. They become an intimate altar made by a woman, and dedicated for her personal devotion to the deities she chooses. My altar contains statues of women, candles, fresh flowers, a photograph of famous Mexico City artist Frieda Kaldo, as well as those of all my female family members and friends.

**2004** - Daughter, Liz, and her husband, Jorge, celebrated my son, Phillip’s 50<sup>th</sup> birthday at their home in Pleasanton. They invited Mary Gwynn, Liz’s friend from Mexico City, now living in San Francisco, to attend the celebration. A few weeks later, Jorge called Phil who was then living in Livermore and asked Phil why he had not contacted Mary. A date happened. A few years later, Phil and Mary were married at a Livermore winery. Today they live in San Francisco. At the time of their marriage, Mary was a Wells Fargo international banker and Phil was involved with Eksigent Technologies in Silicon Valley.

**2006** - I was inducted into the Iowa Women’s Hall of Fame, a project sponsored by the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, for my work with the Iowa United Nations Association for a period of over 30 years. I was very pleased that both of my daughters, Liz and Marlene, were present.

In 2006 I self-published a cookbook, “The Kitchen: A Map to the Highway of My Life.” I wrote in the introduction:

“In 1954 I moved from New York State to Iowa City, Iowa, a city located in the Heartland of America. At that time, Iowa was a ‘meat and potatoes’ state of gently rolling hills, cornfields and grain towers. The population was 98% white. Food and meats and ethnic restaurants available in the East were not to be found in Iowa City or anywhere else in Iowa.

For years I traveled East with an empty suitcase and would head to a local delicatessen for my favorite survival foods to carry back to Iowa – bialys, bagels and Jewish rye bread. Reality soon made me aware that the place to find culinary survival in Iowa was my very own kitchen and that place was about to become the highway of my life in Iowa City. Journeys and not destinations became my mantra.

.....I have prepared this cookbook as a record of memorable meals and food experiences for my family, friendships and loves that have passed through my kitchen since I moved to Iowa over 50 years ago. I have chosen to ignore recent expert opinions that cooking at home is a thing of the past and that recipes and cooking directions continually need to be simplified for the inexperienced. My intended audience is Iowans who not only love, but ‘live’ food.”

**2009** - On the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Adoption of the *UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and in honor of “Ten Years of Human Rights: Celebrating the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights” (UICHR), I was presented an original calligraphic copy of Iowa Poet Marvin Bell’s poem created for this occasion, “The Dead Have Nothing to Lose by Telling the Truth” for my work with the UICHR since its inception 10 years before.

An excerpt from this poem follows:

“She has something to say about the living.  
Let history honor the murmurs of conscience that are heard above ground.  
Who granted men and women the freedom of the sparrow.  
Who taught us to think twice.  
Who showed us that famine is not a fast.  
That exile is the last step.  
That the rights of the few must be written down by the many.”

**2012** - My sister, Shirley Fischer, now widowed and living in Watervliet (New York) and Helen Thaler, Cohoes (New York) spent the Thanksgiving holiday at my home in Iowa. During their visit I invited them to attend a scheduled UICHR Advisory Committee meeting. This afforded an opportunity for them to meet some of the more than 20 Advisory committee members who were present. They included Burns H. Weston, retired Republican Congressman James Leach and Alan Brody, a former UNICEF employee who has lived in places where ordinary people face life-threatening problems of survival – in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Swaziland.

**2014** - I was asked: “What do you think you have accomplished in your life?” After many years of professional activism and dedicating much of my life to the nonprofit world, I was aware that there was little I could hold in my hands. The struggle for human rights and the struggles to eliminate poverty, wars, environmental degradation and social injustice continue unabated. I felt that it was possible to lose sight of great progress in the short term.

I decided that my final answer to this question did not matter. To have a meaningful life, it was important for me to believe in justice in my lifetime and invest in people and future generations. I believe that long-term resistance and fighting for change is important because it always leaves open the possibility for real change. If you do nothing, you really have taken strong action.

What’s next? I feel that I have “flunked” retirement and promise to live until I die. After serving six years as an Iowa City Human Rights Commissioner (1989-1995) and Chair of the Iowa City Human Rights Commission (1992-93), programs on human rights are still a high priority.

Today, I still serve on the UICHR Advisory Committee. Earlier, I was involved in the designation of Iowa City as a Nuclear Free City by the Iowa City City Council. More recently, Iowa City received the designation of a *UNESCO City of Literature*, the first UNESCO city so designated in the United States.

Now serving as General Chair of the Iowa United Nations Association, our 2015 statewide programs included:

“Iowa, the United Nations and Climate Change” and the “Night of 1,000 Dinners,” the latter a sponsored program for some 13 years, to celebrate *International Women’s Day* every March. The 2016 program concentrated on “Refugee Women”.

**2014** - Widowed since 1994, I am now working on my “bucket list.” In 2012, I joined a UI educational tour to Cuba, “Iowa Voyagers – Cuba, People, Culture & Art,” with my friend and recently departed neighbor, Maile Sagen, retired UI Ombudsperson. When heading to the Bay of Pigs, a UI representative traveling with the groups who was one of the first exiles to leave Cuba when Castro took over and who had the financial resources to do so, proceeded to share facts about the American invasion of Cuba. Angered, the Cuban representative with the group responded that tour participants were not in Cuba to hear about the American invasion, but to learn what happened to the Cuban population during this invasion. He also shared that his ration card permitted him to purchase only one chicken a week. But who knows? Maybe we can learn how Cuba has been able to achieve a lower infant mortality rate than in the United States.

**2015** - Because my work in support of the United Nations has heightened my awareness of the difficult lives so many women and children living in poverty suffer around the world, I decided it was time to give back. I am now involved with ANSWER, the American Nepali Student and Women’s Education Relief <[www.answernepal.org](http://www.answernepal.org)>. Its mission is to educate children from the lowest castes and provide them with real lifelong careers so that they will become the vanguard for real change in Nepal.

I am sponsoring the education of Manju, age 14, a member of the Nepal Indigenous Hill Tribe. Manju’s father is an expatriate worker in Saudi Arabia. Her mother is a housewife. Manju has two other sisters. Her favorite subject in school is English. In the future, she wants to become a nurse to help the sick and support people in their old age.

A portion of Manju’s letter dated July 2016 follows:

“I am feeling very happy that you are impressed with my knowledge of English and letter writing skills. I am trying my best to do more progress in my studies. Now, I am graduated from Class 8 (her Examination Board Report included with her letter indicated that she received Grading Marks with Distinction).

...I am inspired by the work you are doing for women. I guess you had a good dinner for *International Women's Day* (UNA Night of 1,000 Dinners – March 2016) in Iowa City.

In my vacation, I visited my village and enjoyed the holidays. Rock climbing was established in my village in 2011. So many people come to visit my village, especially the foreigners. I went to my village after two years and I observed many changes in my village. My village is also developing gradually. (Many families lost their homes in the earthquake).

In my town, it is the season of corn and the people living here are growing corn in their fields. I am very excited to eat corn. Do you like corn?"

Because I believe art is transformative, Manju's art work, "Stop Discrimination," is included in my journal. At its core, art teaches us about the human condition and it also teaches us about ourselves.

**2015** -This year was not a good year for me. The loss of dear friends, Maile Sagen and Burns H. Weston, leave a void that I can never fill. By now I know better than to make plans for the future. And yet, I am still always interested in opening doors. On June 29, 2015 I moved to my new Iowa City home in the Oaknoll Retirement Center. There is always a place here to sit alone and reclaim your solitude no matter what happens in the world outside. Because I continue to feel that the longest relationship we have with anyone is with ourselves.

**2016** - I conclude "My Journal More Musings on the Highway of My Life" against the background of a turbulent election cycle in this country and unsettling conditions around the world including the greatest humanitarian crisis since World War II, repeated acts of terrorism and continuing climate change. Now, more than ever, we need sensible, constructive U.S. leadership in effective international organizations. Iowa UNA continues to work to expand and mobilize citizens to advance that goal.

Today, the Iowa UNA chapters located in Ames, Cedar Falls/Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Fairfield, Des Moines, Iowa City and on the University of Iowa campus, are poised for action. Following the 2015 Paris *UN Climate Change Conference* (COP21) attended by John H. Fraser and Andrea Cohen, Iowa UNA board members, climate news continues to be problematic.

While the Paris climate agreement was a milestone of truly historic proportions, commitments made to date fall far short of meeting goals. However, Iowa UNA is undaunted by partisan gridlock and is working at the grassroots level by supporting and expanding Iowa's participation in the *Compact of Mayors*, a grassroots effort to address climate change..

This spring our membership elected John H. Fraser, a retired administrator from the UI School of Business, to serve as the Iowa UNA President. The board held a retreat in June with a commitment to expand and diversify the board membership and membership base. All of these developments bode well for the future of the Iowa United Nations Association.

But, I am more than aware that it is difficult for anyone to accomplish anything alone. I was able to accomplish the events supporting the Iowa UNA that are listed in this journal only because of the support I received over these many years from Iowa UNA members and numerous people living in Iowa communities. I would like to particularly acknowledge Katy Hansen not only for the work we did together for many, many years, but for her dedication to making the publication of many extensive Iowa UNA reports on global issues a reality.

Before Dorothy Schramm died, she made me promise to continue my work to support the United Nations in Iowa. I truly believe that Dorothy Schramm's spirit guides me along this path each and every day.

My papers are located and can be found at the University of Iowa Women's Archives < <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/iowa>>. Go to: [Special Collections, Iowa Women's Archives, Collection Guide, Search: Dorothy Paul](#). My current e-mail address is [dorothy-paul@oaknoll.com](mailto:dorothy-paul@oaknoll.com).

Dorothy M. Paul  
General Chair  
Iowa United Nations Association

A copy of "My Journal More Musings on the Highway of My life" is available for \$10.00. Checks should be made payable to the Iowa United Nations Association (Iowa UNA) and mailed to 20 E. Market St., Iowa City, IA 52245. The website is <[www.iowauna.org](http://www.iowauna.org)>