

July 2008
Volume 10 Issue 7

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The Alliance

Dedicated to promoting unity, justice, equal opportunity, ethnic awareness, cross-cultural understanding and appreciation for diversity.

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Board of Directors

Becky Arenas
Natalie Avila
Linda Blauwkamp
Jack Hyde
Bin Lim
Norma Luna
Rev. Angela Taylor Perry
Mary Yedinak
Marvin Younger

Leaving Home Because of War: ACEH to Hear Refugees' Stories at Meeting on Friday, July 11

Two West Michigan families who fled their home countries because of war will speak about their experiences at the Friday, July 11, meeting of the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony (ACEH). The meeting, which is open to the public, begins at 7 p.m. at the Center for Women in Transition, 411 Butternut, Holland. The children's group, UNITY, for ages 4 to 14, also will meet.

Elsa Hyde of Park Township was born in a German D.P. (displaced persons) camp in World War II and spent most of her childhood in postwar Austrian D.P camps. With her mother, sister, and two brothers she later immigrated to New Jersey. Mrs. Hyde will share her story, including travels back to Europe to find out more about her family's life, and will discuss the impact that immigrating to the States had on the family.

The Habib family of Iraq was resettled in Grand Rapids this spring through the auspices of Bethany Christian Services and Plymouth Congregational UCC Church. The parents, both working professionals, and their three children left Iraq for their personal safety and lived for two years as refugees in Syria before being granted asylum in the United States.





Members Contribute Support to ACEH

Welcome to new member **Pam Van Zwoll** and thanks to renewing member **Dorothy Chamness**.

Please consider joining with Pam, Dorothy, and other ACEH supporters as we work together for social justice and appreciation for diversity, to make West Michigan a place where all are welcomed and respected. The ACEH dues structure is as follows:

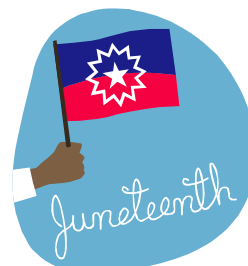
Individual: \$20.00 one year; \$35.00 two years
Family: \$30.00 one year; \$50.00 two years
Nonprofit: \$40.00 one year
Business: \$75.00 one year

The ACEH fiscal year runs October 1 – September 30. In lieu of, or in addition to, paying dues, you may make a pledge of service to ACEH. Checks or service pledges should be made out to ACEH and sent to Treasurer Bin Lim, ACEH, P. O. Box 3007, Holland, MI 49422-3007. To pay by credit card, go to our website www.harmonyalliance.org, click on "Join Us" and use the secure Pay Pal system.

Alliance Takes Part in Juneteenth Celebration

Board members and volunteers from the Alliance were part of the 7th annual local celebration of Juneteenth at Kollen Park, June 21, providing information on ACEH, diversity events, and racial issues. They included **Marvin Younger, Becky Arenas, Bin Lim, Eleanor Lopez, Liz Barveld, Linda Blauwkamp, Phil Olson, and Herb and Ann Weller**. Rev. Wayne Coleman of L.E.A.P. West Michigan and an organizer of the annual event, thanked ACEH for its support and participation. Children and adults flocked to artist **Annie Olson**, of Annie's Arc, working together to create clay art sculptures that incorporated the themes of unity and diversity. A photo of some of the children was printed in the June 22 *Holland Sentinel*.

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States; from its origin in Galveston, Texas, in 1865, the observance as the African American Emancipation Day has spread across the U.S. and beyond.



Members in the News

Victor Orozco had a column in the Friday, June 6, *Holland Sentinel*, about his concern for "the ones who weren't there at graduation"--students, especially minority students, who drop out of school for a variety of reasons. "There are pressures on all children, but some have more...They face cultural and language barriers and family demands that too often take them from the homework desk or even from the classroom," he said. Orozco, a former member of the Holland City Council, proposed several community, political, and mentoring ideas for encouraging students to finish high school.



Mark Your Calendar: August 10 for 10th ACEH Potluck in the Park

It's almost THAT TIME again! Time for what?

Time for the annual **ACEH Potluck in the Park!** And this is our 10th annual potluck, something to celebrate for this grass-roots community group that is the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony.

When and where is it going to be?

It will be **Sunday, August 10**, from **1:30 p.m.** (new start time) **to 5 p.m.** at **Ransom Park**, which is on Ransom Street between 160th and 168th avenues, north of Quincy and south of New Holland.

What happens at Potluck in the Park?

Everybody brings a dish to share, usually one from a family's own ethnic background. ACEH provides beverages and table service. There will be children's activities including a piñata, as well as music, good conversation and fellowship, and LOTS of delicious food.

Who can come?

Everybody, of course! Bring your family, your next-door neighbors, people from your work or your faith community, people who are new to West Michigan and people who have lived here "forever," students, seniors, and all ages in between.

Help ACEH celebrate the diversity of this area and create a welcoming and friendly community! See you on **Sunday, August 10.**

Latino Outreach Center Holds Open House to Introduce Director

The Alliance

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*Bringing People
Together from Worlds
Apart*

The recently established Lakeshore Latino Outreach Center has appointed Poema Weller as its interim director and will hold an open house Thursday, July 17, to introduce her, the board of directors, and the work of the Center to the public and to community agencies. The event will be from 3 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Center's office in the Ferris Building, 345 East 16th St, Suite 241, Holland.

Ms. Weller will oversee daily operations and current programs, help develop future programs, recruit and train volunteers, and work with the Center's committees. A resident of Holland for 37 years, she is originally from Paraguay; she has extensive experience in the field of human services, is familiar with the needs of the people the Center will be serving, and has "a passion for helping them."

For more information, contact Lu Reyes at (616) 399-4077.



The Alliance for Cultural
and Ethnic Harmony

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