

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

KOREA TOWN

Korean Language School doing well

The Korean Language School was established in February, 1982, by the Korean Women's Association.

Its main focus is to teach traditional Korean values, culture and language to young Koreans.

Customarily, Korean parents put their children's education as a top priority.

It is the dream of every Korean parent to have his or her child fully educated, especially by the American education system.

In fact, that is the main reason many Koreans immigrate to America, "the land of opportunity."

Unfortunately, when Korean families arrive in America, they are shocked by the reality that America is not as flexible as they dreamed.

Many well educated Korean fathers leave their professional career opportunities behind to come to America to educate their children.

However, in many cases, due to language barriers, they end up with hard labor jobs. It is customary for Korean mothers to stay home and take care of the children and family needs.

In America, however, the cost of living is high and often mothers, too, have to work.

Therefore, the Korean children, in many cases, are left home unattended to, which can lead to their becoming lonely and bored with life.

This can create stress for the children and can ultimately

lead to trouble.

Consequently, some children will not be instilled with the Korean values, culture and language their parents want them to learn.

Korean parents fear their children will forget their Korean identity, as they are quick to pick-up on American lifestyles and language.

This is the fear that aroused the interest of the Korean Women's Association to start a Korean Language School.

It is also hoped that the Korean generations who are learning now will help keep this school going for coming generations.

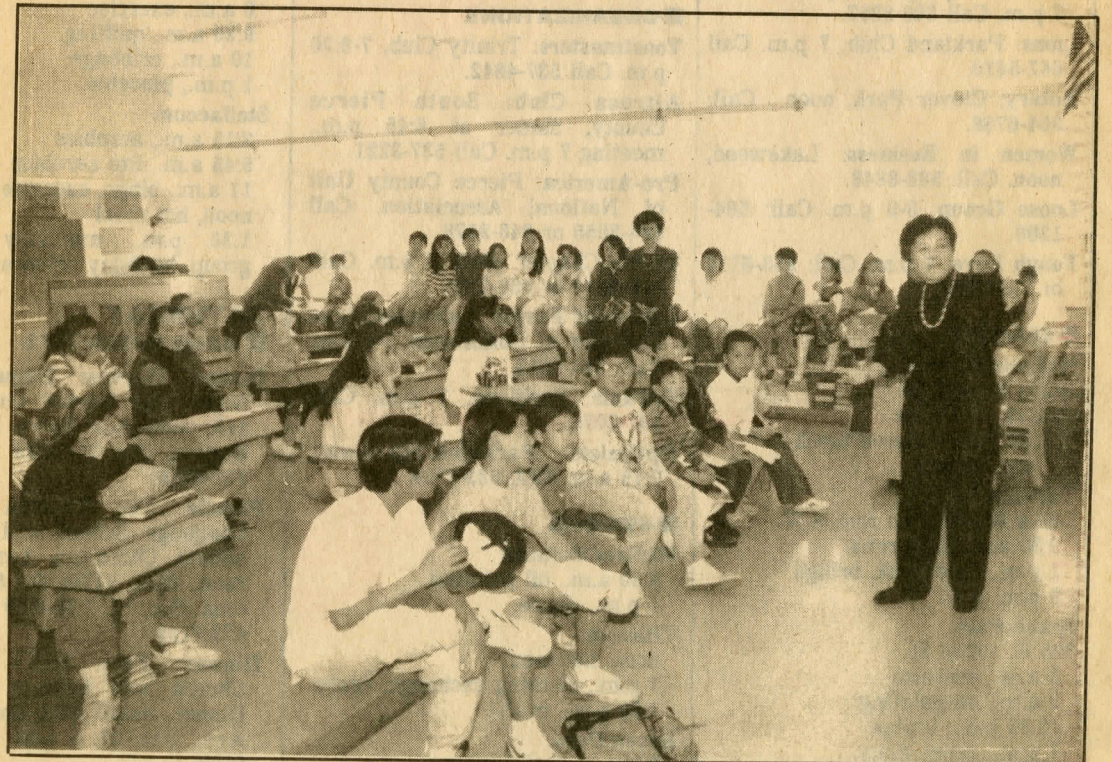
The courses offered at the Korean Language School include:

- 1) Korean Language (reading, speaking, writing)
- 2) Korean culture
- 3) Music

The qualification for admission to the school is to be at least six years of age.

The school's staff consists of five Washington State Certified Teachers:

Mathew Hwang (ESL teacher, Mt Tahoma High School), Sul Ja Warnick (ESL teacher, Grant Elementary School), Maria Hwang (second grade teacher, Bernie Elementary School), Ok Sun Wilson (second grade teacher, Fernhill Elementary School), and Song Ja Park (ESL teacher, Franklin High School) and principle of the Korean Language School.



Students listen to Song Ja Park during session.

Commerce, culture help create a 'Koreatown'

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By JEFF WEATHERSBY

Korean immigrants such as Sulja Warnick and Ok Sun Wilson draw a sharp distinction between Koreans who came to the United States out of choice and other Asians, such as many Vietnamese and Laotians, who came as penniless refugees.

A principal difference, according to Warnick, is that most Koreans who came here fell within the middle-income bracket in their native country.

"We had a choice of whether we wanted to come here or not," Wilson explained.

And they came to America with money.

"Koreans have some money to start, so a lot of Koreans have their own businesses," explained Warnick.

Warnick is a past president of the Korean Women's Association, a Pierce County group that functions much like the YWCA. The association provides shelter for battered women, enrolls them in English classes and helps them sign up for welfare or find jobs.

Warnick, who majored in English literature at a university in Taegu, Korea, and continued that work in graduate school in Seoul, came here six years ago after marrying her English adviser in college. Her husband is Fred Warnick, a former ROTC officer who is now assistant project superintendent for Tacoma Dome Associates.

Wilson, current president of the Korean Women's Association, has been here 14 years. Both women are Tacoma school teachers, Wilson at Fern Hill Elementary and Warnick at Baker Junior High.

Many of the Korean businesses are locating in Ponders, which, to some, is a "Koreatown" in the making, similar in appearance to Seattle's Chinatown.

A study of county records show that Koreans own many of the properties along Pacific Highway between Bridgeport Way and Gravelly Lake Drive, making Ponders the hub of a Korean community that also extends into other parts of Lakewood, Spanaway and Tillikum. Signs along the roadway indicate Koreans have moved into a variety of businesses, including a small grocery store, restaurants and nightclubs. Koreans also own



way, including a motel and a topless dancing joint, although the Korean ownership is not evident from signs or the building facades.

"Ponders is becoming more of a Koreatown," said Eddie Yoon, an attorney who is a frequent spokesman for the Korean Society of Tacoma, an information center for Koreans who come to Pierce County. He said he did not know why Koreans seem to be buying property and opening their businesses in the Ponders area.

But prices are going up there because of the Korean investments and it is becoming harder to find a good business spot now, he said.

Warnick said she thought that Lakewood might produce a Koreatown in time. Immigrant groups, she explained, like to stick together. She explained that Korean businesses began locating at Ponders to be near McChord Air Force Base and Fort Lewis where spouses of Korean wives were on duty. Gradually, other Korean business people began locating their businesses near the ones already established.

Yoon said many Koreans remain here because it is difficult for an immigrant to leave his or her sponsor and they want to take advantage of the support inherent in a community which now numbers an estimated 15,000 people. For example, Tacoma-area schools offer bilingual programs. Another local advantage is the work of the Korean Women's Association, which offers English classes, literature in Korean and translation and counseling services when it has the funds to do so.

The increasingly large Korean community in Lakewood and op-

tract Koreans from other parts of the United States, Warnick said.

Koreans have branched into real estate, auto and auto body repair, marine supply, dentistry, travel agencies and other businesses. A few Korean farmers have begun to specialize in cabbage and other vegetables favored by Koreans, Warnick said.

Warnick said Koreans with language difficulties tend to turn exclusively to Korean businesses.

In the past 10 years, more and more Koreans with capital have come to this country, Yoon said. The attorney noted that upswings in the Korean economy have created the capital being brought to America. Korea exports many cars and provides part of the labor force for Arab countries, he said. Consequently, Koreans are the recipients of some of the petrodollars which western nations have paid out to oil-producing Arab countries, he said.

He added that Koreans are taught from an early age to save their money. Because of their insecurity in moving to America, they often work as much overtime as possible to build up their savings.

Typically, newly arrived Koreans are dependent on family members already living in the Pierce County area for about six months after their arrival.

Even Koreans with money want to learn more about American society before purchasing a business, Warnick said.

Yoon said Koreans do not like to turn to welfare or other forms of government help. Instead, they tend to take "labor-intensive" jobs that require little language skill, such as welding, sewing, harvesting oysters and mushrooms, canner work, or jobs in lumber mills and meat-packing firms. Koreans admire the American free-enterprise system and tax advantages, he said.

When they have enough money, Koreans try to go into business for themselves. A popular first business is dry cleaning, a type of work which also requires little language skills.

"You never lose money in dry cleaning," Yoon said.

Typically, a Korean will go to a Korean real estate agent and ask the agent to find him a business he can operate, Yoon said.

While Koreans will save their



Staff photo by WARREN ANDERSON

Korean immigrant Sulja Warnick

any Koreans who get loans from a bank. They use their own money," Yoon said.

For cultural reasons, the Koreans are not accustomed to business contracts and often write nothing down when borrowing money. An institution peculiar to the Korean community is the "Kye" or savings club, a group of approximately 10 people who contribute to the fund monthly. Members then borrow from the pool of money.

Koreans avoid banks because they lack a credit history, the lawyer said. But he added there has been some talk in the Korean community of starting a Korean bank.

Koreans still in Korea have also expressed interest in investing in an American bank, according to one local businessman.

Bringing money into the United States poses a problem for Koreans because of strict Korean currency laws designed to keep money at home, according to Yoon. He characterized those laws as "stupid."

Yoon said Koreans break the Korean laws when they take their money from Korea, but such activities are not illegal in this country.

Not everyone agrees. When a Korean family recently applied for a liquor license for a South Tacoma Way restaurant it

had purchased, the family appeared to have great difficulty explaining to the Liquor Control Board where it had obtained its capital.

The Koreans told the Liquor Board they had raised the \$170,000 they had invested in the South Tacoma Way restaurant by saving it, selling property, borrowing from a relative and bringing \$20,000 into the country illegally.

"The only problems I see (with the application) are the facts that his federal tax returns do not accurately reflect his true income and wealth for the last four years, and the \$20,000 that was brought into the United States contrary to law," wrote Kenneth Wilson, investigations coordinator for the state Liquor Control Board.

The head of the Korean family, a 41-year-old man who had worked at an area meatpacking firm from 1968 to 1979, had assets of \$863,000, according to liquor board records.

Casual record-keeping seems to be a problem with some Korean-run businesses. Liquor board auditors said in 1981 they examined business records of another Korean restaurant and found them in chaos.

"Daily sales records of food and liquor . . . have obviously been frequently adjusted without explanation," according to the audit. The cash register was at times not operating properly and repairs were unsuccessful, the audit noted.

The future suggests that Pierce County's Koreatown will be growing. Not only are more Koreans moving to the county, but Tacoma is aggressively seeking more business contacts with Korea.

Tacoma already has formed a sister-city relationship with Kunsan, Korea, and Mayor Doug Sutherland recently predicted, "Korea will be a substantial market on the Pacific Rim. It and other Oriental countries will be important to the growth of (this) area."

Tomorrow: Culture shock.



JANET JENSEN/THE NEWS TRIBUNE

Chaurita Asaeli, 13, performs a Samoan dance with fellow Baker Middle School students in observance of Asian and Pacific Island Heritage Month.

Asian heritage takes center stage

Students of all backgrounds tap into the cultural traditions of Asian, Pacific Island nations

By **DEBBY ABE**
THE NEWS TRIBUNE

On a colorful spring day last month, the gym at Baker Middle School resounded with the strains of the Cambodian stringed takay and the slap of bamboo poles.

Students shed their navy-and-white school uniforms and some donned the Vietnamese tunic dresses called ao dai. Others wore fuchsia-and-rice-white Korean gowns or Samoan waist wraps called lavalava.

The teens, 80 in all, performed folk dances imbued with the spirit of peoples in Asia and the Pacific Islands.

The occasion was the third annual Asian Pacific Island Heritage Month celebration.

The hourlong performance before the student body at the South Tacoma school culminated a three-month undertaking by com-

munity volunteers, students and several Baker employees.

"It's a wonderful effort," Principal Jay Stricherz said. "It gives us an opportunity to celebrate the cultures and ethnicity of our students and what has meaning to them."

Of the 885 students who attend Baker, 50 percent are white, 21 percent Asian American, 21 percent black and about 8 percent Hispanic, Samoan or American Indian.

"I thought this is the best way to share the beautiful Asian culture with the mainstream," said Sulja Warnick, an English-as-a-second-language teacher who started the event three years ago.

However, coordinating the program turned out to be so much work the first year that Warnick wasn't sure she would do it again.

"The second year," she said, "kids came to me and said, 'How can we not do it?'"

Warnick agreed and has coordinated the program ever since. She said the event is a true collaboration of school and community volunteers.

For about 2½ months before the program,

volunteer dance instructors met at least twice a week after school to teach students the dances.

Teenagers chose to learn the dances of one of five cultures — the Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia or Samoa. Most of the youngsters decided to learn the dances of their ethnic group.

Sixth-grader Sinae Hong said she wanted to learn more about her Korean background. She discovered how to play the "sogo," a lollipop-shaped hand drum she beat while the Korean dancers twirled across the floor waving miniature white wind socks in a mask dance.

Leah Suapaia was only too happy to share the dances she learned as a child in American Samoa.

"I'd like to show them what my heritage and culture is about," she said. "It's fun. I enjoy doing it."

Added Filipino dance instructor Gussie Jagod, "If we don't do this, the culture will be lost."

'It's a wonderful effort. It gives us an opportunity to celebrate the cultures and ethnicity of our students and what has meaning to them.'

— Jay Stricherz,
Baker principal

아시아커뮤니티 리드하는 봉사團體로 成長

대한부인회 年예산 2백만弗... 노인복지등 다양한 프로그램 實施

워싱턴주 대한부인회는 미국내 여러 한인단체 가운데 연간 2백만달러나 되는 예산을 집행하는 사회봉사단체이다. 여성들로 구성된 단체임에도 불구하고 온갖 어려움을 극복한 끝에 창립 20년만인 지난해 자체건물을 매입, 명실상부한 봉사단체로서의 기틀을 마련했다. 부인회의 어제와 오늘, 그리고 내일을 알아본다.

〈편집자주〉

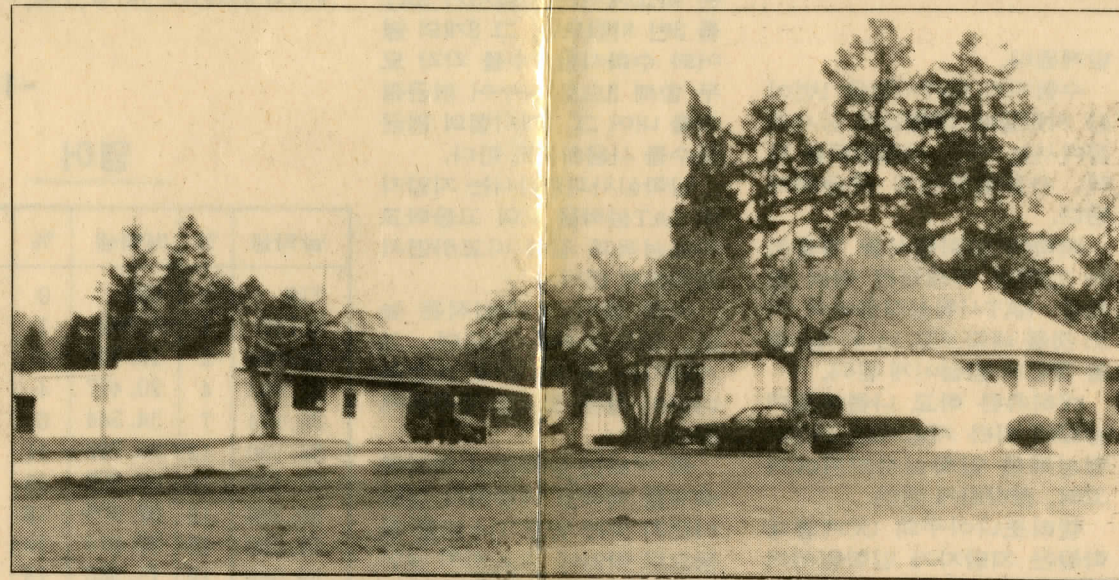
「워싱턴주 대한부인회」는 1972년 타코마에 거주했던 김남희씨등이 중심이 돼 원래 「타코마 대한부인회」란 명칭으로 출발했다.

초대회장 김남희씨는 74년까지 연임했고, 그후 명 알리드·홍자 화이트씨로 이어졌다.

이때까지만해도 친목단체에 머무르고 있었는데, 76년 리아 암스트롱씨가 회장이 되



▲리아 암스트롱씨

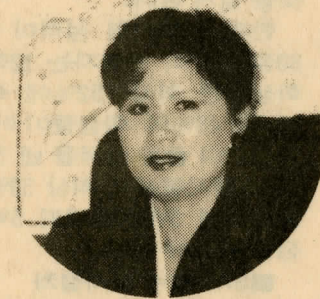


▲워싱턴주 대한부인회가 창립 20주년을 맞아 지난해 매입한 자체건물 전경. 대지면적 2에이커에 교통 요충지에 위치해 있어 발전의 여지가 많다.

심턴 전지역으로 확대해야 한다」는 의견을 제시, 임원이사가 만장일치로 동의함으로써 18년간 간직했던 「타코마 대한부인회」란 명칭이 「워싱턴주 대한부인회」로 변경됐다.

물을 20만달러에 매입했기 때문이다. 이해에 「유나이티드웨이」회원단체로 가입하기도 했다.

퍼시픽 애비뉴 96 스트리트에 위치한 대지 2에이커, 2개로 된 회관건물은 교통이 좋은 곳



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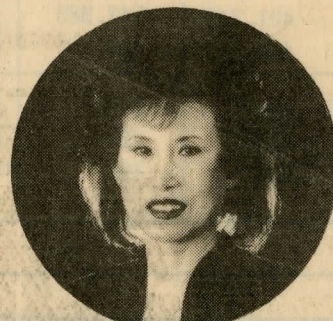
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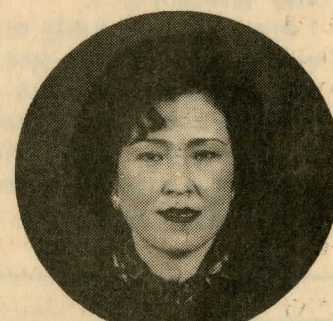
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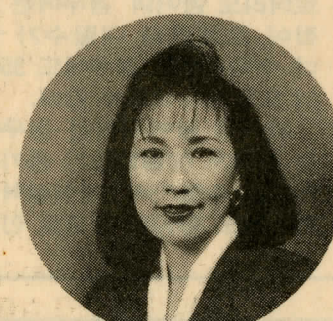
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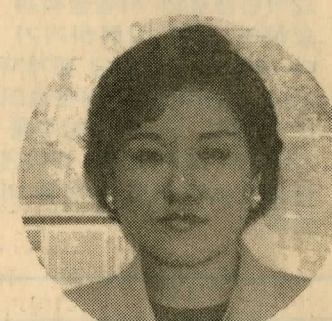
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