



For Immediate Release

MAYOR GAVIN NEWSOM & RAINBOW WORLD FUND INVITE YOU TO THE "TREE OF HOPE" LIGHTING CEREMONY, WED. DEC. 2 • 5:30 pm AT CITY HALL

Thousands Worldwide Contribute Wishes for the Future Of The World to Decorate a TREE OF HOPE in San Francisco's City Hall

San Francisco, CA- October 26, 2009- San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, and charity Rainbow World Fund (RWF), the only international humanitarian aid organization based in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and friends community, invite you to the unveiling of the Tree of Hope in a unique public dedication ceremony Wed., Dec. 2, 2009 at 5:30 pm at San Francisco's City Hall Rotunda.

The Tree of Hope, San Francisco City Hall's official holiday tree, will feature 5,000 white origami cranes and silver stars, each containing written wishes for the future of the world from individuals across the nation and around the world. The Tree of Hope, a gift from the LGBT community to the world, was created by RWF as a way to inspire hope and encourage people to think about what they would like for the future of the world. The Tree of Hope will be on public view from Dec. 1, 2009 to Jan. 2, 2010. The Delancey Street Foundation generously donated the tree.

People worldwide are invited to send their wishes for the future of the world at www.rainbowfund.org/tree. The wishes will be folded into thousands of origami cranes by a team of origami enthusiasts including survivors of the 1945 atomic bomb. The project is a collaboration between San Francisco's LGBT and Japanese American communities and includes the participation of local elementary, middle, and high school students in San Francisco. It is inspired by the story of Sadako Sasaki, the child whose journey and death several years after the bomb was dropped in Hiroshima, transformed the origami crane into a symbol of world peace.

"The Tree of Hope is an exciting community project and a chance for the City of San Francisco's compassion to be seen and heard throughout the world promoting peace and humanitarianism." – SF Mayor Gavin Newsom.

Wishes from the President to school children, from San Francisco to Sri Lanka, make San Francisco's City Hall's holiday tree a unique and powerful symbol of unity and hope. Some

notable wishes on the tree will include **President Barack Obama, Dame Jane Goodall, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Mayor Gavin Newsom, Jennifer Siebel Newsom, David Arquette, Courteney Cox Arquette, Frances Moore Lappe, Danielle Steel, and Stanley Gatti.**

“The Tree of Hope taps into two of our most powerful resources – the human mind and heart – to give individuals a way to join together to express our hopes and intentions for the future of our global community.” says RWF Executive Director, Jeff Cotter.

The tree lighting ceremony and party is a free event that begins with a concert at 5:30 pm by The San Francisco Boys Chorus. It continues with remarks scheduled for 6:00 pm by actress Sharon Gless, Rita Moreno, Porter William of Entertaining People will be the emcee; Rev. Nobuaki Hanaoka (an atomic bomb survivor) is officiating the tree lighting. A party with light refreshments and drinks will continue until 8:00 pm. Singer Veronica Klaus will entertain at the party.

About Rainbow World Fund

Founded in 2000, RWF (www.rainbowfund.org) is an international humanitarian charity based in the LGBT and friends community. RWF’s mission is to promote LGBT philanthropy in the area of world humanitarian relief. RWF works to help people who suffer from hunger, poverty, disease, oppression, and war by raising awareness and funds to support relief efforts and sustainable development projects around the world.

RWF currently supports projects focusing on global HIV/AIDS, water development, landmine eradication, hunger, education, orphans, and disaster relief worldwide. RWF is the first and only LGBT based humanitarian aid organization. RWF also works to raise awareness of the charitable contributions of the LGBT community, and to establish connections with non-LGBT communities. RWF programs increase LGBT visibility, serving as a platform for LGBT compassion and concern.

Significance of the Origami Crane

In 1955, the origami crane became an international symbol of peace when the world learned the story of Sadako Sasaki. Ten years after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, 12 year old Sadako contracted leukemia. While in the hospital, a friend told her about a Japanese legend that the folder of a thousand paper cranes would be granted one wish. Her wish to be healed grew into a wish for peace for all the world. Sadako passed away and was 356 cranes short of her goal. Her classmates folded the rest and all 1,000 were buried with her. A children’s campaign honoring Sadako’s hope, strength and determination led to the creation of the Children’s Peace Monument in Hiroshima’s Peace Park.

Submit Your Wish

Wishes for the Tree of Hope can be sent to Rainbow World Fund, 4111 - 18th St. #5, SF, CA 94114 or via the RWF website: <http://www.rainbowfund.org/tree> (Wishes recorded in the guest book at City Hall will be added to the tree throughout December).

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