

Follow up, follow up, and follow up

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In the center: Judith Crane Ross, James Balcer and Congressman Dan Burton.

When Rev. [Michael] Jenkins and I began our American Freedom Coalition (AFC) work in 1987 we had a political consultant. I still remember the very first thing that he taught us. He said, “these are the 3 most important lessons that you must always remember.” The first one is to follow up. The second most important thing is to follow up and you guessed it, the third most important thing is to follow up.

I am looking at the photos of our just completed True Family Values Banquet in Chicago, and I am reflecting on the guests sitting at the banquet tables. There are a few first-time participants like our Greek back yard neighbors, but the majority have been long time friends.

First of all, there is Judith Crane Ross. Judy began attending (Unification) Leadership Conferences, even before the AFC was formed in 1987. In fact, the very first meeting that I ever attended in Chicago was with Rev. Jenkins to meet Judy and her daughter Debbie. Judy’s husband Andy would guide us on how to raise our children (Andy and Judy had four when we first met them). Two of Judy’s brothers have been Congressmen and her father was one of our nation’s great anti-Communist professors and journalists, to say nothing of the fact that his scientific institute, formed in 1950, included the very first computer dating service.

So now its 30 years later and Judy is standing on the stage with Dr. Ki Hoon Kim receiving the True Family Values Lifetime Achievement Award. And she is holding two ski pole type objects because that’s the only way she can walk after her hip replacement. But she walked about a mile from the parking lot to the hotel and joyfully romped up the stairs to get her award on stage.

Dr. Kim and Dr. Jenkins have moved onward and upward, leaving me as the longest serving Unificationist member in Chicago. Many of our closest ministers from 1984 have moved on to the spiritual world, but others like Pastor T.L. Barrett, Rev. Dr. LeRoy Elliott, Rev. Helen Cooper and many more are still with us.

I remember when I inherited the mantle of becoming the (Unification Church) state leader of Wyoming in 1986, I started my ministry by following up on the previous state leader’s contacts—I know that is difficult—trying to pass on personal relationships is not easy. I credit my deep-seated relationship with Rev. & Mrs. Jenkins for helping me continue to follow up with their contacts.

Another gentleman on the stage to receive his True Family Values Award was Chicago City Councilman, James A. Balcer. I first met Mr. Balcer about 30 years ago, when he was leading a POW/MIA march in downtown Chicago. He is a Vietnam Marine Corps veteran with a Silver Star for gallantry in action. Someone had called the office and requested black armbands for the POW/MIA march. Rev. Jenkins’

assistant bought some material, made the armbands, and I brought them downtown to the march. Some time later Mr. Balcer was appointed as the head of Veterans Affairs for the City of Chicago. Because of our relationship he invited Rev. Jenkins and me to be part of the committee to plan the Welcome Home Parade for the Desert Storm soldiers. Through this activity, we met many veterans. As the parade was the very first in America, it was on the front page of every newspaper. General Colin Powell was on the reviewing stand and the parade not only welcomed home the Desert Storm troops, but it also honored the Korean and Vietnam veterans who had never experienced a welcome home parade.

Over the years, in the Chicago area, we have maintained relationships with many ministers as many of you are aware. We have also maintained a very deep personal relationship with a congressman (who was a city councilman when we first met him 30 years ago), the treasurer and comptroller of the state (who was a state senator 30 years ago), a county councilman (who was a congressman's chief of staff 20 years ago), three governors, a congressman (who remarked to us upon his return from a fact-finding trip to Russia, that "everything that Rev. Moon told us 15 years ago was absolutely true), the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, who was a state legislator when we met him in the early 1980s, and who has since spoken at a Unificationist international leadership conference in Korea and accompanied The Little Angels to Australia.

We also had a young, Harvard couple (he was a state senator at the time) attend one of our banquets. They later became the President and the First Lady of the United States of America.



Ambassador Sam Zachem

I have mentioned contacts from the Chicago region, but there are many more all over the country. People like Congressman Dan Burton from Indiana who introduced the Parents' Day resolution in 1993 and Ambassador Sam Zachem, from Denver, a Lebanese Christian who was appointed the U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain by President Reagan and who at a young vibrant 80 years old is still, along with Congressman Burton, speaking at Unification conferences all over the world.

Let me conclude with a story about Dr. Morton A. Kaplan. Dr. Kaplan was a distinguished History professor at the University of Chicago. He met the Unification movement in the 1970s and became both the Chairman of ICUS (International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences) and PWPA (Professors' World Peace Academy), as well as the first editor of the World and I magazine. Under his guidance and leadership, many Nobel Laureates like Dr. Eugene Wigner from Princeton University (Nobel prize in Physics) were introduced to the Unificationist movement.

Dr. Kaplan, a Jewish professor who married an African-American opera singer 50 years ago, is now 94 years old. His mind is as strong as ever and he has a great memory. At one point he was in line to become Chairman of the History Department, but because of his relationship with Rev. Moon, the alumni were afraid that donations to the university might decrease. When I sympathized with him about losing this prestigious position, he shook me off and said, "I wouldn't trade one hundred chairmanships for the relationship that I have had with Rev. Moon over the years." Last Saturday, after the True Values banquet, Dr. Kim, Dr. Thomas Walsh, Dr. & Mrs. Gordon Anderson, and I went to visit Dr. and Mrs.

Kaplan. We presented gifts to them, given by True Mother -- a beautiful Korean jewelry box for Mrs. Kaplan and the newest 3 volume set of Father's speeches for Dr. Kaplan. While we were there, Dr. Kaplan reiterated that he feels that the greatest experience in his life has been his relationship with Rev. Moon.

Every so often we will run into someone who used to be connected with Unificationists years ago. They may have fallen off of our map, but never from our hearts. Let us all remember those crucial words and always, "Follow up, follow up, and follow up!"