

## COMMUNITY LIFE

## Korean kids observe tradition



VIRGINIA NICOTRI

Women deserve credit  
for care-giving years

The Social Security Act was passed in 1935, and its benefits have since become an integral part of American life.

Today one in every six Americans is receiving some kind of benefit under the act. Social Security is important to all Americans, especially to older women, as it is generally their principal, if not their only, source of income.

When Social Security was created, the social climate in America was quite different from that of today. The average American family consisted of a wage-earning husband, a full-time homemaker wife, and two dependent children. Only 17 percent of married women worked outside the home, one marriage in six ended in divorce, and most women could look forward to a lifetime with the same partner.

This is the model on which the Social Security system was based. For Social Security purposes, married women were treated as dependents, entitled to draw benefits on their husbands' work records. Today, that model represents fewer than 10 percent of American families. Today, two-thirds of the women between the ages of 18 and 64 are in the paid work force, including more than half of the mothers with infants under one year.

Most work because they need the money. The two-earner marriage has become the norm, but women's share of the retirement pie is no greater. What has not changed are women's caregiving responsibilities.

While husbands and fathers may occasionally

See WOMEN, 14A



STAFF PHOTO BY JERRY ZOLNICKY

What she wears: Sarah Ahn of Farmington Hills portrays the Korean bride in brightly colored garb.

Korean Culture Camp in Southfield is where Korean adoptees learn about their heritage. The Korean wedding ceremony is part of that picture.

By ETHEL SIMMONS  
STAFF WRITER

They're growing up in America, but many young people of Korean heritage still observe the customs of their homeland when they marry.

That's why a traditional Korean Wedding Ceremony was re-enacted recently at the Korean Culture Camp of Metro Detroit at the Korean Presbyterian Church in Southfield.

Camp director Suzie Park of Bloomfield Hills said she first saw the ceremony when she attended the wedding of Karin Chung of Royal Oak, who is a middle school teacher in Detroit.

"It's so fascinating, so colorful," Park said. Asked whether she plans to have the Korean ceremony as part of her wedding, Park replied, "I think my parents would kill me if I didn't!"

For the campers, Chung explained the ceremony honoring the parents and brought a video of her own wedding. She said, "In Korea only the groom's parents are honored and the bride's family is left out of it. But when I got married, I bowed to my parents too."

Chung loves the dresses worn by traditional Korean brides. "I think they're prettier than a white gown," she said. She is saving the one she wore. "Now my daughter will want that when she gets married."

## New to campers

Korean adoptees and their non-Korean siblings learn about Korean culture when they attend the week-long camp, which is in its third year and has two sessions. This is the first year the wedding ceremony has

See KOREAN, 14A



Wedding day: Traditional Korean costumes are worn in re-enactment of ceremony, narrated by Karin Chung (right).

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