



## *World Families Australia*

*Wishes members & friends*

*A safe & happy holiday season*

The World Family Office will be closed from 20th December to the  
14th of January, 2020

## **Annual General Meeting**

*The best attended AGM, in some time, was held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at Tyndale College. Our increased attendance was due to Michelle Nethery arranging ZOOM technology that enabled attendance via phone, laptop or computer. In addition to the people at the meeting, we had two ZOOM attendees from Queensland, one from Victor Harbour and one from the Adelaide Hills.*

*All annual reports, presented, were accepted. All Office Bearers stood for their positions again and were re-elected.*

*It was pleasing to acknowledge the difference that donations make to the lives of people in overseas countries, living in difficult circumstances.*

### **Office Bearers 2019 ~ 2020**

President:	Morgan Smith
Vice President:	Christine Hoffman
Secretary:	Bert Michels
Treasurer:	Glen/Elaine Smith

Morgan Smith  
President

# Tyndale School Visit to Kenya

Each year staff, students and parents from Tyndale Christian School travel to Kenya and specifically Eldoret, Western Kenya to work with children and adults at Testimony and Neema Children's Homes. Over 200 children live in the two communities and live together as families with a house mum and dad in each of the five individual houses. Testimony Faith Homes was started by John and Esther Green in 1969 and currently cares for a total of 137 young people in 4 family homes. Associated with but not directly linked to Testimony Homes is a church, a school and a day care centre. A few kilometres from Testimony Faith Homes is Neema Children's Home. Established by Joshua and Miriam Mbithi in 2005, Neema currently cares for 49 children. Miriam was raised in Testimony and later returned with her husband Joshua as a house parents of Jacaranda Cottage. In 2005 God clearly called them to work with some of the most vulnerable in the Kenyan society, those who are HIV infected or affected.



During our time at the Homes we were able to check in on the projects that are supported through WFA. One such project is the bakery, a self-sustaining project that provides bread for the children in the Homes and sells loaves to the school to maintain a steady income to continue the work of the bakery. In 2018 the bakery received two new ovens. The ovens have allowed the Bakery to move from charcoal ovens, which are both smoky to operate and for which fuel is scarce, to electric and to be able to expand their business to sell to other schools in the area.

An exciting addition to the projects this year was the purchase and establishment of water tanks. Previously the vegetable gardens, established to provide regular supplies of vegetables to the children, have relied totally on rainfall and city supplied water. The rains are becoming increasingly unpredictable and the supply from the main supply is very erratic. As a result maintaining a supply of vegetables has become very difficult. The tanks will improve the process of growing and supplying vegetables.



While at both Testimony and Neema our team of 38 worked really, really hard. This year we tackled a number of access pathways in both Homes, created a half-court basketball court at Testimony and carried out painting tasks as part of our ongoing maintenance at the Homes.



And even though we worked all day we still had plenty of time to play! The over whelming acceptance shown to us by the children at Testimony and Neema was amazing. Unconditional love was given by both families and we all enjoyed and learnt from this friendship. And we had a lot of fun in the Homes!

## Bonga Latrine Project ~ Ethiopia

The RE Leaders at St Francis Xavier's Catholic School wanted to support World Families Australia with their fund-raising for the Latrine Project. Through our school's relationship with Mr Bert Michels and the money raised in the past, the children wanted to help complete the project.

The RE Leaders organised a Spin-the-Wheel game to play during recess and lunch times where children paid a donation to Spin-the-Wheel and win a prize.

Christine Hoffman and Bert Michels then visited the school to speak to the children about the project and to show photos of the progress.

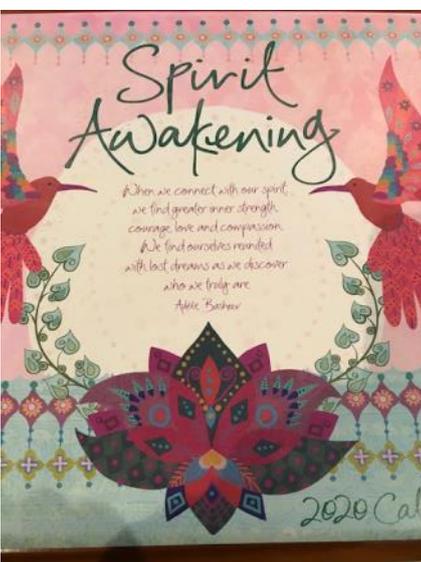
Donations made by the children were then collected by the leaders of the Sports Houses and the House with the highest money raised earned extra spirit points for Sports Day.

Overall, \$625 was raised.



**Bert & Christine with St Francis Xavier's School Students**

We only have about \$5000.00 to go, a successful Movie fund raiser over the week end saw us raise \$5430.00. So we have another method of raising that money. My wonderful daughter Adele of Intrinsic Enterprises has given me

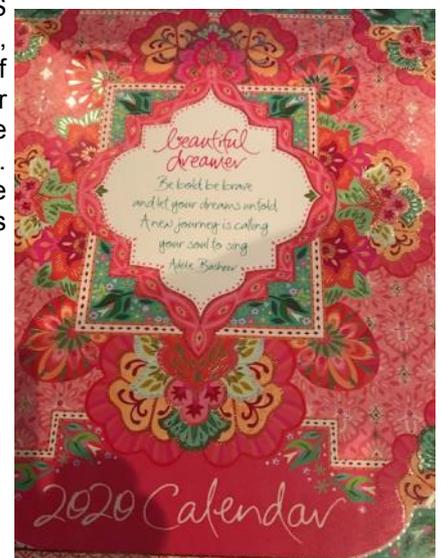


200 x 2020 Calendars to sell. ( PICTURES ATTACHED ). « Beautiful Dreamer, right, gold embossed is selling at the retail price of \$30.00 each, Spirit Awakening, left, for \$26.00. All proceeds from the sale of these calendars will go direct to the Latrine project. Christmas is around the corner and these make beautiful gifts. Let's get these toilets finished!

Please email me with your orders at [ce.dj.hoffman@bigpond.com](mailto:ce.dj.hoffman@bigpond.com)

Many thanks in advance for your support.

Christine Hoffman



## Farewell Sheila



Many of you who have followed the Lalibela, Meskele Kristos, or medical projects in Ethiopia, will have heard Sheila Shalhevet's name mentioned many times over the past 10 years. Sheila and her husband Yosi, in Israel, had become dear friends of WFA project officers Christine Hoffman and Sandi Petersen over the past decade. Sheila was pivotal in helping a number of children WFA was supporting in Ethiopia to get life-saving heart surgery. Sadly, Sheila died late August after being unwell with untreatable cancer for about a year.

My first contact with Sheila was in 2007, when Sada, a child from the WFA project in Jimma, was in Israel for heart surgery and Sheila sent me beautiful photos of Sada's progress following her surgery. Sheila had been a social worker working with the Ethiopian migrant population in Israel, and once retired, volunteered as a photographer for 'Save a Child's Heart' (SACH), a program providing heart surgery in Israel for children all over the world.

In 2009 we realised that Tamru, a young boy supported in the WFA Lalibela Destitute Children's Project, was critically ill soon after entering the project. Initially it was assumed to be the result of severe malnutrition, and medical assessment in Lalibela was very limited. Within months it was evident he was dying. I reached out to Sheila for help to connect with the SACH team. We faced incredible hurdles, not least that Tamru had no known legal guardians for many years, and being malnourished and extremely unwell with late stage heart disease, his life hung in the balance. Sheila's passion in advocating for him was endless – we had daily communication for months trying to overcome the many hurdles.

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Jacquie, an Australian woman who set up the Australian arm of an organisation called 'Hope for Children' in Ethiopia, put us in contact with a young man, Yarod, who she had helped for many years. Yarod offered to foster him in the city once Tamru was allowed to leave hospital, while we tried to arrange heart surgery. Amazingly Yarod had received lifesaving heart surgery through SACH himself, many years before.

WFA raised the required \$US10,000 for Tamru's surgery through the wonderful generosity of WFA donors. He arrived in Israel in the latter half of 2009 where Sheila and Yosi promptly became his Israeli grandparents. Christine and I travelled to Ethiopia – Christine's first trip there – going to a town near Meskele Kristos with photos of Tamru in hand, trying to find his family to show them he was alive and see what ongoing connection could be set up once Tamru returned to Ethiopia. We were able to find his mother, siblings, grandparents and community, who were overwhelmed with joy to find Tamru was alive. We then travelled to Israel to meet Tamru, Sheila and Yosi and many others who had helped to save his life, including Professor Abraham, an Ethiopian paediatrician from Jimma (where we have WFA projects) doing his cardiology fellowship. We stayed with Sheila and Yosi, doing some sight-seeing with Prof Abraham and separately with Tamru, before escorting Tamru back to Ethiopia into Yarod's care (his need for ongoing medical care meant returning to his village was not possible). Sheila and Yosi introduced us to messy falafels eating, Old Jaffa, Old Jerusalem, Tel Aviv streets and markets and much more.

Meeting Prof Abraham in Israel was pivotal in the development of the various Medical Outreach (MOP) and Medical Emergency Fund (MEF) projects which fund treatment for individual children as well as work with local doctors and hospitals in Ethiopia to provide training for health professionals, screening programs and outreach medical clinics to rural areas. These include a prosthetics clinic to Bonga, a cardiac training and screening project, and much more. Abraham travelled out to Liwan with my daughter Lexi and I to help advise on a health post, and provided endless advice for sponsor children and others that I came across that I needed a medical opinion on.

Sheila had a yearning to visit Ethiopia and asked me if she could accompany me there. In October 2010 Sheila and Yosi met Lexi and me in Ethiopia. Together we took Tamru back to Lalibela to see his 'project siblings' for the first time since he left 1 ½ years before on the brink of death, and then to his family and community in Meskele Kristos who he had not seen for around 7 years. The joy on their faces to see their long lost and loved boy healthy and happy was something I will never forget. Yosi later liaised with Engineers without Borders in Israel, leading to them going to Meskele Kristos village to set up a water source. This was the first of several trips to Ethiopia for Sheila and Yosi, who developed strong connections with many of the children who came to Israel for heart surgery over the years. Many more children identified through WFA projects have had their lives saved through surgery over the years, often with Sheila's advocacy, and always receiving her grandmotherly support when in Israel. There are many others who she and Yosi met in Ethiopia and helped in other ways. However, Tamru's story is the one that brought Sheila, Yosi, Christine and I together as friends. We were all deeply touched by sharing the journey to saving this young boy's life.

Sheila, Yosi and another Australian donor supported Tamru for many years and Tamru is now in college, a healthy wonderful young man. He continues to live with Yarod and Yarod's family, and remains connected with his 'project siblings' in Lalibela and his family in Meskele Kristos.

***Farewell to an awesome woman and a dear friend. Sandi Petersen***

The logo for WOMADelaide, with 'WOMAD' in blue and 'elaide' in green, set against a white background with a blue border.

**6th ~ 9th March 2020**

WFA will again be having a stall at WOMAD and we are looking for volunteers to man the stall. A planning meeting in late October or early November is being organised. If you would like to help, please email Vicki.

[vhyde@westnet.com.au](mailto:vhyde@westnet.com.au)



Speakers are available to tell groups about the work of W.F.A.

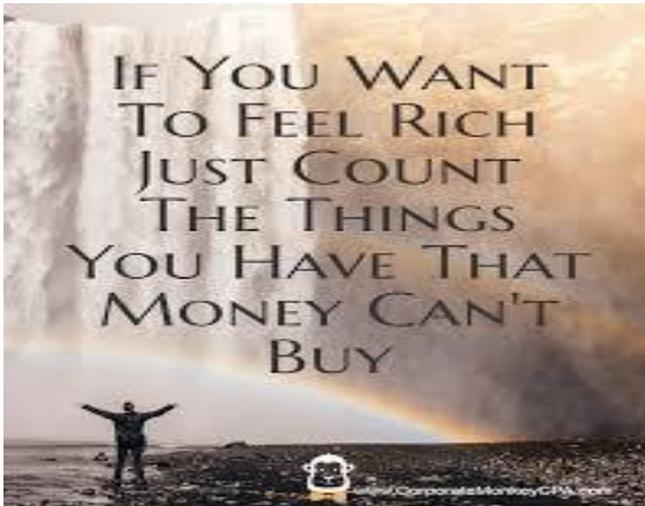
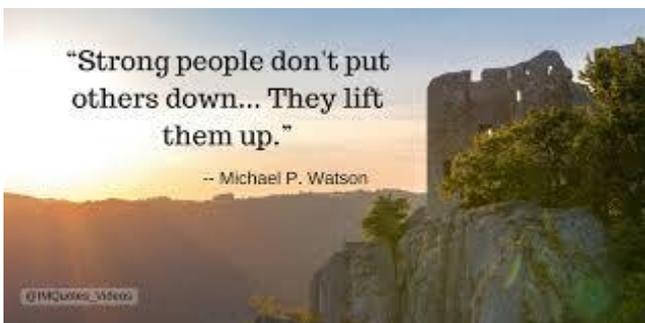
Please contact us through the office: (08) 8258 7909

## LAST DAY FOR YOUR GIFT THIS QUARTER

1st December 2019

### Please Note

**Any articles for the next newsletter should reach the office by 29th January 2020**



Opinions expressed by contributors to Sponsorship News are not necessarily those of World Families Australia

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