

# WFWP OCEANIA NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 | 2019

## Connecting Communities Anniversary Dinner Saturday May 4<sup>th</sup> | Victoria, Australia



Each year WFWP Victoria celebrates the inauguration of WFWP International through the Connecting Communities Dinner on the first Saturday of May. This year we are twenty seven years old! The dinner is an opportunity for multi-cultural communities to mingle and share.



During the evening, WFWP Victoria honours their Board and volunteers and presents the prestigious Global Women's Peace Network partnership award (GWPN) to a new partnering organisation. The partnership between WFWP and our GWPN recipients is intrinsic to connection with the community. Without connection there is no community, and without community, the ability for society to support our families is lost. In short, the

values intrinsic to becoming 'one human family' become meaningless.

WFWP values our partners and works to support their work and development. This year, the award was presented to the Victorian Samoan Advisory Council (VICSAC). We were honoured to have the President, Mr. Lio Ale and the Vice-president, Taupau Salafa Mano in attendance to receive the



award. WFWP Victoria partners with VICSAC through our Charity Walk and Pacifica festival, held annually on the first Saturday of March.

The Victoria Samoan Advisory Council (VICSAC) was established in 1990. VICSAC is translated in Samoan as Fono Faufautua Tagata Samoa i Vitolia. Their mission is to promote and build a stronger spirit of unity and solidarity among and across all the Samoan Communities, from youth to older

generations. They undertake matters and issues of common interest, and set up and arrange events, programs and activities to bring the Samoan people together. They promote awareness and ways to help, support and inspire their Samoan community mentally, physically and spiritually.



An evening highlight is always the raffle event which raises funds for our local projects. We are extremely fortunate to have business supporters and friends in the community who offer high quality goods as raffle prizes. These businesses are advertised during the event and receive certificates of appreciation afterwards.

We love to support upcoming young talent during the entertainment segment. This year, Rose de La Montaña shared her passion as a fingerstyle guitarist. She has a dedication to solo Latin American guitar music, merging classical and popular guitar styles. Rose is a bandleader, songwriter, arranger, and educator. Her music truly created a relaxing atmosphere of beauty.





We launched our book *HerStory: a spiritual journey* during the evening. The book is a window into multi-cultural Australia with stories and recipes from seventeen wonderful ladies who shared their stories with us during our Her Story sessions. Each woman shares their journey. The stories are inspirational, heart-felt and often funny. HerStory is our story, our heart, our culture, and our spirituality as one human family. Some of the ladies featured in HerStory were

present during the evening and conducted a book signing for those who purchased the book.



WFWP Victoria auspices a group of young ladies who started an awareness group called 'Enviro Girls'. The girls come with their parents and had the opportunity to share with everyone about their projects, what they have done, and how they started.

**Feedback from participants:**

"Beyond words! It's a wonderful experience being in WFWP. Organisation beyond boundaries."

"Wonderful event, and inclusive."

"Very nice, warm and enjoyable evening. Great, it was fantastic."

"Celebrating and recognising the great work that many are doing in our communities and connecting them all together."

"Enjoyed the company, the introduction to the organisation and the food."

"A very enjoyable evening with inspiring people. A wonderful meal and entertainment."

"There was a very warm and friendly atmosphere. A great show."

**See you all next year at the 2020 Connecting Communities dinner.**

# Mindfulness Retreat, Victoria

Saturday April 6<sup>th</sup> | Victoria, Australia



It was a beautiful early morning when we gathered for a day of mindfulness in the bushland of Belgrave Heights. For the event, WFWP Victoria partnered with the International Centre for Inner Peace and Happiness Inc. (ICIPH), founded and directed by Venerable Bhikkhuni Bodhicitta. Venerable is a Sri Lankan Theravada Buddhist Nun based in Melbourne. She is a Buddhist Chaplain at RMIT University, Melbourne; has conducted numerous meditation retreats, lectures, Dharma talks, and discussions in Australia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Japan, India, Canada, and USA; and, a renowned meditation teacher with over 35 years' experience.



Highlights of the day featured a lecture by Ven. Bodhicitta about how the mind works and how to manage stress; learning about the meditation and mindfulness process; practicing mindfulness through the actions of 'walking meditation' and 'sitting meditation'; and, a time for Q&A, discussion and sharing the experience.

Ven. Bodhicitta shared that mindfulness trains your attention and awareness to achieve mental clarity and emotional calm. Meditation aims to reduce stress, anxiety, depression and pain, increase peace, perception, self-concept, and well-being.



Presently, meditation is under research to define its possible psychological, neurological, and cardiovascular health effects.

Feedback revealed that participants surprisingly felt more mindful, in that they could bring their minds back to the present easier and through this felt much more relaxed, less stressed and in the moment.

## Challenges Facing Families in Australia and Opportunities for Renewal

Saturday June 15<sup>th</sup> | Melbourne, Australia



Organised by UPF and WFWP Australia, this second seminar in a series of four Peace Building Seminars explored the challenges faced by Australian families and the skills needed to face these challenges. These seminars have become very popular with community and service organisation leaders to augment their professional development.



Presenters - Kosina Hanson (right) Taniya Jayasinghe (centre) and Dr John Bellavance (left)

Kosina Hanson: *The neuroscience behind relationships and how emotional intelligence can be practiced in the home environment.*

Kosina is a social worker supporting young families experiencing violence in the home. Her work seeks to restore and strengthen the family by encouraging positive and safe relationships. She discussed how human beings are deeply connected on an emotional level. She argued the need for a new societal movement emphasising human connectedness.

Taniya Jayasinghe: *How Family trauma affects psychological adjustment in adulthood.*

Taniya spoke about the effects of trauma on individuals and within families. She explained the nature of trauma and how to cope with it. She is a counsellor and a member of the Crisis Assessment Team for teenagers, where teenagers are assessed for physical violence and diagnosed and medicated for personality and anxiety disorders. Taniya also facilitates workshops for teenagers dealing with self-esteem, anger management and body image issues.

Anne Bellavance: *Family Wellbeing and Functional Behaviours.*



Anne is the national President of Women’s Federation Australia and sits on the Board of WFPW International. Her presentation looked at the dysfunctional aspects of human nature that cause conflict. Anne spoke about how to turn these around to create unity and peace. Anne explained how maladaptive strategies to cope with life that become habit, are believed to contribute to many, if not all emotional disorders.

Randall Apps: *Building bridges between Interfaith Communities.*

Randall is the director of the UPF branch in Geelong. He spoke about the security and emotional support he and members of the interfaith community provided the Geelong Mosque community members in the hours and days after the Christchurch Mosque massacre.



Dr John Bellavance: *Mindfulness and Peace Building.*

During his presentation, Dr. John focused on the following abilities: the ability to live in the moment; focus on a task; take on challenging tasks; being resilient; forgetting yourself; and, focusing fully on another person.

**Ambassador for Peace Award**

Dr John Bellavance (left) and Will Abdo, UPF Victoria Assistant State Director presenting the Ambassador for Peace award to Hussam Chebo (centre).



Mr Chebo was the 2009 recipient of Victoria’s Multicultural Awards for Excellence. His contribution to the area of multicultural media is immense, particularly in the Arabic language. His service to migrants in the settlement process over the years has also been outstanding.

# Annie-Claude Malere Nasak

## WFWP Vanuatu President visit

May 11<sup>th</sup> | Sydney, Australia

During a Charity Luncheon in Sydney to celebrate the 27<sup>th</sup> year of WFWP International, the WFWP Vanuatu President, Annie-Claude Malere Nasak was the Keynote Speaker. Historically, WFWP New South Wales has supported the development of WFWP Vanuatu. Annie's keynote is summarised below.



### Report from WFWP Vanuatu

In most parts of Vanuatu, culturally a women's place has always been seen as belonging to the kitchen and raising children. Of course, this is no longer the case, but the change of mindset is slow to allow more women to further their studies, or occupy high positions of leadership in all works of life.

Women Federation for World Peace was established and registered in Vanuatu in 1994 by the hardworking and dedicated Japanese volunteers. They helped to empower local women as 'woman of peace' to be self-reliant and raise future leaders.





Aila (NSW President), Annie (Vanuatu), Tracy, Jynene

Since the establishment of WFPV Vanuatu, we have received tremendous and continuous support from WFPV Australia by sending school books, computers, solar lights, reading glasses and sewing machines.

Many of the school books were distributed to schools on the remote islands, where the need for them is great. Also, WFPV helped empower local women by establishing a 'women's sewing centre' on the Island of Tana.

Unfortunately, on March 2015, the most powerful cyclone to ever hit the Pacific smashed into the islands of Vanuatu and destroyed most of the buildings throughout the Islands. Homes and structures were blown apart.

Tana was the most affected Island! The aftermath assessment clearly showed that all the equipment and school books sent to Tana by WFPV Australia were also destroyed by the cyclone.

Three years after the cyclone, women are still busy rebuilding their communities, and schools are slowly recovering. Some of the schools, especially on Tana Island, large tents are still being used as school rooms, while new classrooms are slowly being rebuilt.



We are really grateful for the continuous support of WFPV Australia. This May, Vanuatu again received 5 sewing machines and 45 boxes of elementary school books. This will help to empower more local women and raise our children to become future leaders. Thank you for helping to make a difference to the life of children and women in Vanuatu.

# UN International Day of the Family

May 18<sup>th</sup> | Auckland, New Zealand

UPF-NZ commemorated the UN International Day of Families at the Polynesian Centre, Mangere, Auckland. A total of 80 participants from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds gathered for the event. Under the theme: “The Family Ideal, Our Common Heritage”, the event was co-sponsored by the Women’s Federation for World Peace New Zealand (WFWP-NZ).



Mr. Geoffrey Fyers, UPF-NZ Secretary-General was MC for the event. Rev. Elder Suamalie NT Iosefa Naisali of the Reformed Christian Church opened the proceedings with prayer. Rev. Losefa with his youth choir gave a great start with a soulful song accompanied with a guitar and a mandolin.

## Keynote Address



Mr Adel Jamati, UPF NZ Director, in his keynote address *The Family Ideal and World Peace* said, “Our responsibility towards love is paramount; humanity is at a crossroad: Selfish love or True Love. The world can be healed by the power of family love: conjugal love, parental love, filial love and siblings love. A great revival of the Family Ideal is needed at this critical time of human history.”

## Comments from the Panel Discussion on ‘Social Trends Affecting Youth and Families Today’



Mrs. Janne Sawada, Parenting Program Facilitator:



More influence from Government policies is creating a need for parents to become more aware of their impact on the family.

Time together is a very necessary component in creating connection and family culture. Nurturing is missing for many children when parents are too busy.

Ms. Violet Noel, Social Work Team Leader, Shakti NZ:



Speaking as a Social Worker who is supporting victims, the Social System has to confront the rising number of violence abuses, especially on women; 98% of abuse issues are from men to women. Motherhood is not an easy task, so men need to have more respect and understanding.

Mr. Elliot Iklei, Youth Resilience & Leadership Trainer:



Having been a youth worker for many years, Elliot has seen the weaknesses of broken families and the lack of support for youths. The results are crime, drugs, alcohol and gambling.

The Mates and Dates Education which is being brought into schools through trained facilitators isn't as it has been portrayed publicly.

Through obtaining a copy of the Facilitator Manual, it is clear that its goals are biased towards transgender education: Children starting from the age of five are taught they are not a boy or a girl, but somewhere on a sliding gender spectrum and therefore, sexual identity

depends on the child's desire and choice. The taxpayers are paying for this indoctrination. Teachers are not in the classroom during these sessions.

### Questions and Answers

The panel discussion was then followed by questions and comments from the audience. Comments highlighted what we are facing as a nation.



### Closing Remarks

Mrs. Felicity Cairns, President of WFWP-NZ gave the closing remarks. Summarizing the contents given by all the speakers, she gave thanks to everyone who made the event possible.

## Conclusion

The importance of family and its ideals cannot be understated, especially in this value-confused world. As we gather to celebrate the UN International Day of Families, we are united to protect what is most fundamental and dearest to world peace and human happiness, our families.

TOGETHER WE STAND, TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Keynote address of the event can be found in the following link:

[https://gallery.mailchimp.com/2f3ecd3380055520e6c45ba11/files/c602e105-fd1d-4d16-b005-c77153496c41/The\\_Family\\_Ideal\\_World\\_Peace\\_by\\_Adel\\_Jamati.pdf](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/2f3ecd3380055520e6c45ba11/files/c602e105-fd1d-4d16-b005-c77153496c41/The_Family_Ideal_World_Peace_by_Adel_Jamati.pdf)

Written by Janne Sawada

## International Women's Day, "Balance for Better"

Auckland, New Zealand | 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019



Members of WFP attended an International Woman's Day event organised by Anne Pala, Anita Keestra and friends. We were looked after well with tea and coffee on arrival and entertainment from Ambika Krishnamurthi. Several of the children of the participants provided entertainment throughout the day. Anne Pala introduced the theme of the day and the first speaker, Dr Camille Nakhid, Associate Professor at the AUT School of Social Sciences and Public Policy. Camille spoke on

the need to strive for balance in the community, rather than trying to gain the power of men. “We don’t want to become oppressors, nor do we want to play the victim card. We women are strong and resilient”, she explained.

The second speaker was Roshila Prasad, who is the founder and director of Radio HummFM104. Roshila started the radio station in order to help her own children and the wider community to connect with their roots.

The third speaker was Sasikala Syed Niyamathullah, the co-ordinator for WISE Women, strong women entrepreneurs in enterprises. WISE Women teach skills to women so that they do not feel isolated in the community.



Felicity Cairns from WFWP NZ was the fourth presenter, and spoke on the need for balance in community decision making on all levels in order to make a better world. “Women make up half of the world’s population, but they have different needs, for example health requirements. Men and women are different in order to complement each other”, Felicity explained.

Mandeep Kaur Sidhu, a senior constable working with the Family Intervention Team was the fifth speaker. She is a mother and grandmother. When she came to New Zealand, she was thinking she had the wrong form to fill in, as it didn’t ask whose wife she was. Mandeep shared that in India, as a wife, the husband is your identity.

Naima Ali, a Refugee Co-ordinator, was the final speaker. Naima spoke of the difficulties she faced in New Zealand, and the racism she experienced and is still experiencing. Her key message was that there is too much domestic violence in NZ. Naima urges all women to stand up for each other and challenge the practices that affect our well being.

Raffles were held throughout the day with most people receiving a prize, and we danced to the music of Abba!

A big thank you to the co-ordinators of this event. It was wonderful.

Report by: Lia Goijarts

# Stress Management and Mindfulness

with Hanna Cleaver & Rose Ritchie

27<sup>th</sup> April 2019 | Auckland, New Zealand

It was wonderful that the event was intergenerational, with many young men and women coming to hear about stress management. The WFWP NZ President, Felicity Cairns introduced the speakers, Hanna Cleaver and Rose Ritchie. Hanna is a trained lawyer and studied Yoga in the USA while travelling abroad. She met Rose in the law office where they worked.



Rose, Felicity & Hannah



Hannah Cleaver

Hanna began by talking about stress as a young person. The exam stress she experienced in Year 12 was consuming. “No one teaches you how to deal with stress, and everyone wants less stress in their lives”, Hannah shared. Stress is a personal response to a stressor. FOMO, (fear of missing out), is a big amongst the young generation.



Participants

Hanna talked about her love of skydiving, but it would make her anxious months before the jump. It helps to analyse the stress and ask oneself if the fear is rational. How many fatalities have there been with skydiving? Are you telling yourself stories or untruths about skydiving?

Public speaking is also terrifying for many people. Notice how stress makes you feel! Stress sits in your body as a physical and psychological emotional response.

Healthy ways to respond to stress are:

1. Look after yourself physically. Eat well.
2. Take practical steps to sleep better.
3. Limit coffee intake
4. Exercise



5. Get out in nature
6. Light a candle. The stress evaporates while you hold the candle
7. Breathe. Notice your natural breathing. Expand the lower belly with a deep breath and exhale through the chest three times
8. Keep a gratitude jar and write down three things that you feel grateful for every night
9. Stop labelling things as good or bad. Events in themselves, without ending, could be good or bad. It is better to have an attitude of acceptance. She gave examples of good and bad events such as, a person breaking a leg, which seems bad, but good if it results in missing conscription for the war. Sometimes clouds have a silver lining.

Mindfulness is about feeling fully present, rather than pottering along absentmindedly. Meditation may seem useless, but it is a slow burner, or like cleaning a dusty house. Meditate for half an hour a day. Meditate with a mantra so that the mind doesn't travel everywhere. Breathing alternately through the nostrils is good.

The attendees then closed their eyes for several minutes while Hanna played music and spoke words to help us focus on our breathing, to eliminate all thoughts from our mind. The session created a feeling of oneness with the body.



Meditation session

Rose then spoke about the essential oils that she had brought along to show everyone. Essential oils are taken from the rind and bark of the plant. They will give immunity against harmful elements. Stress affects the organs of the body. We, as humans are created to function as a whole. Essential oils affect your brain and get into your blood stream. Stress affects the gut and the cardiovascular system, so if you exercise, the cardiovascular system will help you to deal with stress better. Good food and supplements help run the body at optimum. Massages are good. Linolal oil relaxes. Put pillows under your back and put your head back to relax as well. Rose also recommended throwing away the "to do" list to get it out of your head. While the fight or flight mode can help pump the adrenaline to rescue us from risky situations, it is not good to be under that stress for prolonged periods. She asked us finally to think about what we were going to commit to, to help ourselves de-stress.



Rose Ritchie



Rose and Hannah

Felicity thanked Debra Taylor and Nita Wallis for knitting hats, booties and blankets for mothers who give birth at Middlemore Hospital. The Middlemore foundation also asked to donate a pair of new Pyjamas for children at Kidz First in June 2019.



Hats knitted by Debra



Debra showing new kids PJ's to donate

The meeting concluded with afternoon tea and informal conversations.



Young women – Group Photo

Report compiled by Lia Goijarts and Felicity Cairns

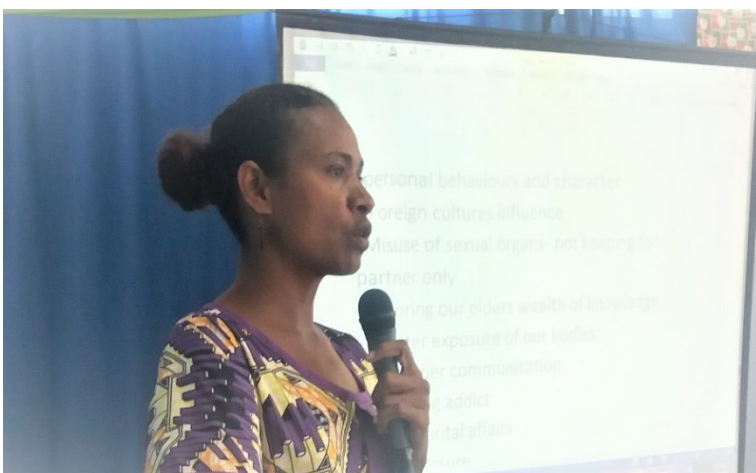
# 'Family is the School of Love, educate for Character' GWPN Seminar

June 1<sup>st</sup> | Honiara, Solomon Islands

Women's Federation World Peace Solomon Islands (WFWP SI) expanded its Global Women's Peace Network (GWPN) during a Community Women Leaders Seminar on 1<sup>st</sup> June. The topic theme was: the *Family is the School of Love, educate for Character*. The event brought 70 participants, both women and men.



Group Photo of WFWP SI Seminar Participants



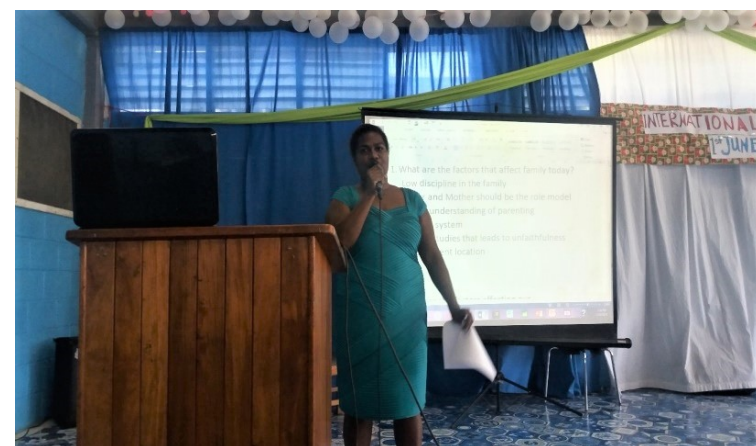
Alice Anthonia Houanihau, member of WFWP SI and President of Guadalcanal Provincial Women was the main presenter for the event. During her Keynote address titled, *the family is the school of love, educate for character*, Alice shared that as a parent it is our responsibility to create true love within our families. Building a 'family of love' creates a character model, where

children can be educated to become peace builders and peace ambassadors.



Group discussion on the topic: *What are key Social Factors that Affect the Family?*

Hilda Houalea gave a brief summary from her group discussion on *what are the key social factors that affect the family?* She shared that the misuse of technology is one of the major social factors that affect the family and has helped create a downturn in family support. She elaborate that parents are spending more time watching TV and interacting on social media outlets, such as Facebook.



Virginia Kevu is a High School Teacher at White River Community High School. She commented positively that Character Education is vital for a School Curriculum to be successful. The summary points from her group discussion on *what are key social factors that affect the family* were: the husband and the wife have little understanding of their roles within the

family, and there is little discipline.



Raynick Marlon Baka is a parent member of the New Hope Academy Kindergarten. Raynick accompany his wife to the Seminar and testified that he is so blessed to have attended the half day Seminar together with his wife, because the information he can take home is beneficial to strengthen and support his family growth and family relationships.



WFWP SI Members who were the working team during the seminar and the main entertainment group for the event.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

The value and importance of the family is crucial in our society today. As we celebrate the International day of Families, let's educate ourselves and understand our roles as a husband and wife within the family, and create a family of peace. The family is the school of love, and within the family we need to educate for character.

*Prepared by: Monica Longanimala Ilala  
WFWP SI Secretary*

# International Medical Volunteer Service

June 24-27<sup>th</sup> | Ba tam bang Province, Cambodia



Dr. YeJeong DeGeer is the Vice-President of our WFWP Queensland Chapter in Australia. She is a podiatrist and runs a medical clinic in Brisbane. We are very excited that YeJeong has had the opportunity to join the International Medical Volunteer Service team in Cambodia this year. YeJeong has been able to offer her expertise to the team in the area of foot and ankle care, and foot surgery.

We are discussing with Cheong Shim International Hospital for the medical team to come to PNG next year. We will keep you posted.

Dr. YeJeong DeGeer, Dr. Jang Sook



Map of Cambodia showing the city of Ba tam bang



Medical team

For the past three years, the medical team has been helping and supporting local Cambodian people who have no medical benefits in Ba tam bang City, which is the capital of Ba tam bang Province in North Western Cambodia. The project is a team effort involving a partnership between the medical team from Cheong Shim International Hospital, South Korea; Aewon voluntary work team, South Korea; and, Sun Moon University Nursing Students, South Korea.



A new library in Sala Mala Primary School was opened on Wed. 26<sup>th</sup> by the International President of WFP, Hoon Sook Nim Moon.



Dr. Ye Jeong DeGeer performing an operation

### YeJeong's Testimony

After my experience in Cambodia I realised how blessed to live where clean water is abundant and affordable medical care is just around the corner. Cambodia still suffers from forgotten mines which were buried during its Civil war period. It has been only 25 years since the war ended. Still many Cambodian kids are suffering from poor sanity and lack of education.

It doesn't cost much to help and support their life. This time Dr Hoon shook Moon from WFP donated funds to establish a new library in Sala Balat primary school.

Without fundamental education, peace cannot be maintained. I really appreciate our collaborated effort in making changes in developing countries such as Cambodia.