



Women's Federation for World Peace

Oceania Newsletter 3/2016

From the Regional Office

Last week I was a guest speaker at a local community radio station. The radio show brings in speakers courtesy of South East Volunteers, an organisation WFWP Victoria is linked with to provide volunteer opportunities for people. This was my 2nd year speaking on the show.



I told stories about our service projects in the Island nations of Oceania; the development of the kindergarten in the Solomon Islands; the supplying of solar lights to remote villages in Vanuatu; the establishment of Women's Sewing Centres in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji; the sending of children's books for primary school libraries; our local chapter activities; and, the annual Support our Pacific Neighbours walk-a-thon. I explained we are an international women's organisation that focuses on empowering women, with projects managed by women for the benefit of their families. The presenter chatted with me and confirmed that women play the leading role in raising their families to a better position; the result being peace and stability starting at the family level. He was taken by our organisations name, Women's Federation for World Peace.

Honestly speaking, sometimes I feel it is such a big goal, but when people hear the organisations name it truly takes their breath away. I had this same experience at a local council meeting for NFPs within the municipality. The room was full of community group representatives. When I introduced myself and said our organisations name, I heard a definite awe struck sound as people breathed in, similar to going outside on a cold crisp morning and the coolness of the air takes your breath away.

We do not realise the profound affect the heart, philosophy and spirit of the Women's Federation for World Peace has on people when they meet us and hear about our activities. Dr. Hak JA Han Moon and Rev. Moon, we thank you for your vision to initiate WFWP International.

**Warmest Wishes,
Anne Bellavance**

Reflections from the Region

A moment of joy and hopeful smiles was seen in the eyes of all the staff and students of the New Hope Academy Kindergarten (NHA), when we brought into the school grounds the solar panels and electrical material for the Island Lights Project in the Solomon Islands (SI). WFWP Australia funded more than 63% of the solar project through their annual Support our Pacific Island Neighbours Walk-a-thon. The total cost of the project was over SBD \$19,000.00.

The project was managed by WFWP SI. The equipment installed included six orbit fans, ten light bulbs, fittings and wiring, and three 100 watt solar panel sets. Within a week the teachers and students were enjoying classrooms with fans, lights and power points to connect laptops.

The New Hope Academy kindergarten will continue to develop. In the New Year, a new building will be constructed that will provide 3 classrooms for the primary grades. NHA is expanding the kindergarten into a primary school. The total cost will be more than SI \$352,000. Let's continue to work together to raise and educate our young people of the world.

Thank you to all our sponsors.

Alice Hou

President, WFWP SI

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The Hope for Humanity Comes from Mothers



“History is calling for reconciliation, compassion, love, service and sacrifice. Today’s problems cannot be solved by the logic of power. ... Our present problems can only be solved by the logic of love.”

Dr. Hak Jan Han Moon
Founder, WFWP International

Overview of WFWP activities in Oceania

Women are Empowered
Families are Strengthened
Communities are Connected

WFWP is founded on the belief that a peaceful world begins in the heart of each person and in each family. The family is the cornerstone of peace and mature couples are the foundation for strong and loving families. Our organisation encourages every woman to become a ‘woman of peace’ through cultivating her heart, the mother’s heart, to care not just for her own children, but for the children of others, the children of other nations, the children of the world, by developing and expressing the qualities of empathy, forgiveness, and unconditional love.

WFWP is committed to

- Serving communities – service projects within Australia & the Pacific Islands
- Strengthening the family – workshops, forums, seminars and conferences
- Reconciling differences and healing wounds of the past – Bridge of Peace
- Global Women’s Peace Network (GWPN) – a global network of women leaders who are peace builders within their community

Philosophy

- Shine & stand up
- Action; starting in the family
- Transformation through teaching
- Impact with love
- Nurture self and others

WFWP Australia supports projects within Australia and the Island Nations of the Oceania region. Projects include: Global Women’s Peace Network; Dignity Project; Annual Walk-a-thon to support our Pacific Neighbours; Workshops, Seminars, Conferences and Forums on Peace Building; Books for the Islands; Solomon Islands New Hope Kindergarten; Women’s Sewing Centres; Island Lights Project; Marriage, Family and Wellness education; Character education; and, reconciliation through the Bridge of Peace ceremonies.

WFWP is a dynamic organisation committed to providing women with the opportunity to create lasting peace in the world by fostering dialogue, developing projects that nurture reconciliation and conflict resolution, and supporting projects that serve the community and overcome racial boundaries; all centering on the inherent feminine characteristics of care, empathy, support, nurturing and cooperation.

Victoria

Dignity Project forum development

Throughout the year a group of dedicated WFPW members and supporters have met together to organise the first Dignity Project forum in Melbourne this coming November.

A background to the Project is given below.

The Dignity Project of Australia was inaugurated during the UN International Day of Peace Conference in Dandenong in 2015 and is based on the Dignity of Women Project initiated by WFPW Europe in 2002.

The goals of the Dignity of Women Project in Europe are to:

- i) Restore the image of womanhood in society
- ii) Inspire women to feel their own beauty and value and to discover their God given dignity and to live it.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Goal supported by the Dignity Project is target 5; Gender Equality.

1. Ban Ki-moon (the previous Secretary-General of the U.N.) called upon men around the world to end violence against women; saying that “violence is an act perpetrated by a coward and speaking up against it is a badge of honour”.
2. The UNESCO Statement about Women’s Contribution to a Culture of Peace is:
“Only as women and men together in equality and partnership can we overcome the difficulties, silence and desperation and secure the understanding, political will, creative thinking and concrete activities which are necessary for global transition from a culture of violence to a Culture of Peace.”

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001206/120683e.pdf>

The focus of the Dignity Project is to hold a forum in the City of Dandenong in partnership and support with local community groups to share best practice and solutions to the question of restoring Dignity.

The forum date on Sat. Nov. 5th was chosen to support the UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, commemorated on Nov. 25th each year.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/>

The Project objectives are:

- Raise awareness and educate about the dignity of men and women (through sharing of real life experiences); a short-term goal.
- Educate to heal & strengthen couple/family relationships, and foster respect; an Intermediate goal.
- Empower men and women, change their behaviours for a ripple effect within society; a longer-term goal.



Dignity Committee meeting

Afternoons with WFWP

During the winter months in Melbourne, WFWP Vic. hosted a series of three workshops in partnership with the Kildara Centre in Malvern, an education and conference centre of the Brigidine Sisters. On the first Saturday of May, June and July, Sr. Catriona Devlin (director of the Kildara Centre), opened the doors of the beautiful and peaceful Centre for the Afternoon's with WFWP workshops. In the dining room participants networked and shared over a warm and healthy lunch. Workshops took place in the conference room, where Anne Bellavance introduced the activities of WFWP International and WFWP Australia, followed by each workshop presenter. The following is a report on each of the three workshops.

Parenting Workshop: presented by Kosina Hanson

May 7th

Songsil Adamedes-Schmid emceed the afternoon. In presenting the *Afternoons with WFWP's* Parenting Workshop, Kosina Hanson (social worker with the Salvation Army and Vice-president of WFWP Vic.) was able to draw on her experience and training while working with The Salvation Army, in their Children and Parenting Support Service division (CaPSS). A variety of parenting programs and positive parenting concepts were discussed.

Dividing the workshop into three parts, Kosina began by covering the basic concepts that set the historical foundation for today's parenting literature. As well, she set the tone for a 'no-drama discipline' approach to parenting, following ideas set by prominent leaders in this field such as Tina Bryson, Dan Siegal and Louise Porter.

During the final two sections of the workshop, Kosina gave her insight into two evidence-based positive parenting programs; Mindful's Tuning into Kids, and the Australian Childhood Foundation's Bringing up Great Kids. Although several participants had children who were already all grown up, the feedback was very positive. Participants reported that the information could be further applied to any meaningful relationship in their lives, and was not only useful for parents and young developing children.

Kosina said, "personally, I certainly enjoyed the opportunity to share the knowledge and inspiration I have gained through working as a Parenting Support Practitioner."

Thanks to WFWP!



Kosina Hanson

Group photo

Mindfulness Workshop: presented by Malika Ramdhayan

June 4th

Biance Joyce from the WFP Vic. Board emceed the afternoon. Malika Ramdhayan has worked as a social worker for the past 6 years. She focuses on improving the quality of life of youth in the homeless section. This work led her into gaining qualifications as a Life Coach and a Meditation Practitioner. At present she works for Launch Housing and focuses on homeless youth or those at risk of homelessness. In this capacity, she is able to coach youth using her Life Coaching and Mindfulness skills.

Malika is passionate about improving the quality of life for young people and is very successful in guiding people to achieve their goals; therefore improving their quality of life and finding peace and happiness.

Malika began the introductory workshop by explaining the meaning and philosophy behind Mindfulness. She led us through exercises by guiding us to be present in the room, present to oneself, and to acknowledge our feelings and emotions. Afterwards we completed a series of questionnaires to help us explore what is important in our lives and what our needs and value are. The results were quite revealing and much discussion about what values are dear to us in our lives was brought up during the group discussion.

Malika concluded the workshop with guided meditation.

Participants commented that they were quite surprised how the workshop revealed their inner most values and felt more aware of what is important in their lives. We were definitely relaxed after the meditation and inspired to be more present in our daily lives. We were very grateful that Malika could spend her afternoon with us.



Malika Ramdhayan receiving flowers at the end of the workshop



Yoga Workshop: presented by Didi Shamita & Didi Nirupama from Ananda Marga

August 6th

Prior to lunch, Didi Shamita and Didi Nirupama guided participants through stretching techniques specific to women's health. The conference room was laid out with yoga mats and inviting cushions. We learnt the correct breathing process during exercise and how to give a self-massage, with a targeted focus on joints and the endocrine glands of the body.



Anne introduces WFWP

The women's welfare department (WWD) of Ananda Marga celebrated their 50th year of international service last year. <http://anandamarga.org.au/women/>

The Women's Welfare Department of Ananda Marga was established in 1965 especially to serve and create avenues for women to develop their full potentialities. Yoga nuns provide instruction, counselling and personal guidance to women as they advance along the path of yoga. The meditation & yoga centres, schools, children's homes, medical clinics, youth hostels: and short and long term disaster relief, with branches in almost every part of the world, are fully run by women. "Let women be the vanguard of a new revolution which humanity must achieve for a glorious tomorrow." - Shrii P.R.Sarkar

WFWP Australia and WWD Australia became partners after their participation in the UN International Day of Peace conference of 2015 in Dandenong. Each Ananda Marga nun begins their names with Didi, meaning sister.

We were very fortunate to have Didi Shamita present the philosophy of Ananda Marga yoga and give insight into the structure of the mind, according to yoga. Didi Shamita is the vice-president of WWD Australia and in this capacity conducts yoga and meditation retreats throughout Australia, and supervises the social projects of WWD in Australia and Oceania. The WWD Oceania social projects are located in Australia, New Zealand, PNG and Guam. Service projects include pre-schools, children's homes, women's health clinics and farm projects. In Victoria the Didi's run 2 pre-schools and long day centres; in Fitzroy North and a recently opened centre in Coburg.



Yoga with Ananda Marga

Developing Partnerships

In celebration of the end of Ramadan, WFWP Vic. was invited to set up a stall during the Eid Festival in Traralgon, a regional centre in Gippsland, east of Melbourne. Jacinta Darbishire and Anne Bellavance were honoured to meet the women of the United Moslem Sisters of Latrobe Valley (UMSLV) and their friends within the Gippsland area. Part of the work of WFWP is to develop networks through the Global Women's Peace Network. UMSLV is an organisation that brings Moslem women of all different denominations and nationalities together within the Latrobe Valley. The women are empowered and inspired. Both Jacinta and Anne were equally empowered and inspired by their joy and vision to support Moslem women and their families.

Arfa (UMSLV president) said, "UMSLV have been instrumental in bringing the Muslim community and the broader community of the Latrobe Valley together to better understand our differences, but most importantly to celebrate our likenesses. Through events such as Understanding Scarves and Understanding Journey's, a climate of acceptance, understanding and friendship has been established in the Latrobe Valley amongst a broad range of women." Although it is run by Muslim volunteers, membership is open to both Muslims and the wider community. UMSLV organises events that foster social integration; with the aim of improving cultural and religious understanding, acceptance and respect.

WFWP Vic. is happy to announce that UMSLV is our newest partner and is working together with WFWP to enrich the upcoming UN International Day of Peace conference in September and the Dignity Project forum in November. We look forward to hearing more from the women of UMSLV.



Anne and Jacinta



Aims & Activities

WFWP Chapters adhere to the principle that women, working together, taking initiative and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families, are resolving the complex problems of our societies and world.

Ultimately "solutions" come as true partnerships between men and women are established in all levels of society. The beginning point is within society's most elemental level - the family. Therefore, WFWP works to provide women worldwide with: the knowledge, tools and support needed to create peace at home, peace in our communities and our nation.

Queensland

Religious Youth Service Youth Forum

27 July 20016, Brisbane, Queensland

On July 27th, WFWP Queensland in partnership with UPF sponsored a Religious Youth Service (RYS) Forum, on the topic "Peace and the Environment." The forum was attended by youth, Ambassadors for Peace (AFP) and members of WFWP and UPF. The faith communities represented at the forum were Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh.

Steve Evans of UPF Queensland emceed the proceedings. The program began with an Acknowledgement of Country by Aunty Peggy Tidyman, president of Logan Elders and an Ambassador for Peace.

Mamiko Rattley, chair of WFWP and UPF Queensland, welcomed all participants, especially the young people in attendance. She said that WFWP and UPF are very happy to sponsor this forum, because it provides an opportunity for young people of different faiths and cultures to discuss ways of working together on crucial issues such as peace and the environment. Representing AFPs in Queensland, Mr Surendra Prasad OAM, greeted everyone.

The three speakers of the forum were:

- Dr Yejeon Degeer, Vice president of WFWP Queensland. Yejeon gave a PowerPoint presentation to introduce RYS Queensland.
- Ms Anne Clarke OAM, Executive Officer of the Oxley Creek Catchment Association. Anne explained her lifelong work to keep Oxley water clean. She asked everyone to be mindful of how our wasteful lifestyle causes damage in the environment around us.
- Miss Sam Nolan, from Quaker Earthcare. Sam described their work for the environment and her belief that people in faith communities need to lead the way in conservation.

A question and answer session followed.



Etienne & Paul sharing their work with Multicultural Youth Queensland



Sharon leading discussion



WFWP members supported the forum



WFWP's key members- Mamiko Rattley, Sharon Orapeleng and Aunty Peggy Tidyman

After the presentations, WFWP's Project Advisor, Ms Sharon Orapeleng, skilfully led a discussion with the young participants. Topics focused on how young people can promote peace and develop projects that RYS can adopt; in so doing encourage young people to engage in dialogue and collaborate for peace beyond their own faith community.

Many were eager to join the discussion. The General Manager of Multicultural Youth Queensland, Etienne Roux, shared how he and his youth leader, Paul Joseph, organise projects with thousands of young people to promote harmony and Peace in his local council area. Both Etienne and Paul are happy to help the RYS initiative.



Yejeong, Vice president-WFWP QLD introduces RYS

Yejeong DeGeer suggested creating a Facebook page to keep in touch with the youth who are open to get involved with RYS Queensland.

The program finished with networking over supper. It was an inspiring gathering with enthusiastic young participants.

Report by Mamiko Rattley



Group photo

Solomon Islands

Solar Lighting Project for the New Hope Academy in Solomon Islands

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Thank you WFWP Australia for the assistance and meeting our needs at the right time. On behalf of the NHA and WFWP SI, we convey our sincere appreciation for our major sponsors; WFWP Japan, WFWP Australia, WFWP SI, Jin A school in USA, UPF SI, FFWP SI, and individuals and families within SI and internationally for your sincere and continuous support towards our school development. The New Hope Academy kindergarten will continue to develop. In the New Year, we will be constructing a new building that will provide 3 classrooms for the primary grades. NHA is expanding the kindergarten into a primary school. The total cost will be more than SI \$352,000.

Let's continue to work together to raise and educate our young people of the world.

Thank You

Alice Hou

President, WFWP SI



Staff & Students (June 2016)



To donate go to WFP Website
www.wfpaustralia.org



<https://www.facebook.com/wfp.australia>



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Support the efforts of WFWP volunteers in Oceania



New Hope Academy Kindergarten
(Solomon Islands)

Women's Sewing Centres

Island Lights Project

Character Education

Books for the Islands



United Nations Affiliation

WFWP International became a "NGO in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations" in 1997. This status has continued to be renewed based on the preparation of the Quadrennial Report.

Consultative status is granted by ECOSOC upon recommendation of the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs, which is comprised of 19 Member States.

There are only 139 NGOs worldwide that hold the general consultative status. The requirements of this level of affiliation include:

- ❖ Applying organisation's activities must be relevant to the work of ECOSOC
- ❖ The NGO must have been in existence (officially registered) for at least two years in order to apply
- ❖ The NGO must have a democratic decision making mechanism
- ❖ The major portion of the organisation's funds should be derived from contributions from national affiliates, individual members, or other non-governmental components
- ❖ NGOs granted General Consultative Status must submit to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, every fourth year, a brief report of their activities, in particular regarding their contribution to the work of the United Nations (Quadrennial Report) general consultative status is reserved for large international NGOs whose area of work covers most of the issues on the agenda of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies. These tend to be fairly large, established international NGOs with a broad geographical reach.

The benefits of receiving this status include:

- ❖ The NGO may propose new items for consideration by the ECOSOC
- ❖ Organisations granted status are also invited to attend international conferences called by the UN General Assembly special sessions, and other intergovernmental bodies.

WFWP International maintains a UN office in New York City. WFWP International has twenty UN representatives in seven countries: Austria, Chile, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Switzerland, Thailand, and the US.