

COMING EVENTS

YOUR INVITATION TO TEWOAF  
19th ANNUAL DINNER DANCE

# BANGLES & BLING

Sparkle and shine on the dance floor!

Thursday 20th October 2011 LEONDA BY THE YARRA 2 Wallen Road, Hawthorn 7pm

Dress to dazzle. Delicious Indian Fare. Auction and Raffle. Great Prizes.

The East West Overseas Aid Foundation. A volunteer driven Australian organisation which

Ample parking available BOOK EARLY ... See over for details.

**\$130 PER HEAD**

2012 GOLF DAY

Preparations are ongoing for our 4<sup>th</sup> annual Charity Golf Day. The date is yet to be confirmed, but as soon as it is we will let you know so you can mark it in your diary.

All levels are welcome. If you would like to play, and perhaps bring some friends to make up a team, please contact us on 03 9650 0514 or admin@tewoaf.org.au



TEWOAF ARE GRATEFUL TO LISA BOYD OF 'SEASOL INTERNATIONAL PTY LTD' FOR THE PRINTING OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

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Newsletter

Issue 11. June 2011

www.tewoaf.org.au

Welcome again to the newsletter of The East West Overseas Aid Foundation (TEWOAF). In the early 1990's Drs Chitra and Natteri Chandran established TEWOAF to develop sustaining activities that would bring about positive changes for the benefit of the Alamparai and surrounding communities. Their vision is certainly being fulfilled. Our support base in Australia, along with our volunteers, has made this possible. Your regular interest and backing remains the integral links for TEWOAF to continue what has so far been achieved, so thank you for your continuing support.

CHANGES TO STRUCTURE

You should be aware of some changes made to the governance structure of TEWOAF. We now have a three-tiered structure to provide maximum scope for our supporters to participate in TEWOAF activities:

1. First, you can become a member of the TEWOAF formally by paying an initial joining fee of \$10 and an annual fee of \$10.
2. As a paid-up Member, you will be able to stand for, and vote for, the six-person Management Committee at the General Meetings. The Management Committee is accountable for running TEWOAF (and its current six members are: Dr Chitra Chandran (President), Dr Beth Z Charles (Vice-President), Dr Natteri Chandran (Treasurer) Ms Kerrie Carstensen (Secretary). Mr Tony Godbold and Ms Denise Hutchinson. All these positions will be open for nomination and election by the Members at the next Annual General Meeting to be held in the second half of 2011.

3. If you don't want any formal involvement, you can still contribute as a volunteer by attending the Thursday Working Group (TWG) meetings, held every alternate Thursday, at Ross House, Flinders Lane in Melbourne from 11 am to 1 pm. The TWG is an informal group that helps the Management Committee in carrying out various tasks mainly relating to fundraising as well as providing advice and suggestions. Attendance is not compulsory. Kerrie, in her capacity as the Secretary of the Management Committee, chairs the TWG. This structure is expected to help us ensure our programs in India are managed with transparency and accountability.

As you already know, TEWOAF collects funds and forwards them to India where The East West Foundation of India (TEWFI) is in charge of all operations in our five main areas of activity: Community Health Care; Child Rights and Relief; Education; Community Development and Environmental Sustainability. While this newsletter only scratches the surface of these activities, it highlights our recent and most exciting programs.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE



UHCC nurses Senthamilselvi and Senbagam with clients during a Mobile Clinic session.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE

*Continued from front page*

The Uluru Health Care Clinic (UHCC) continues to assist in overcoming deeply embedded community issues, such as inadequate hygiene and health education. It also provides free health services for the surrounding population of 26,000 people. The Mobile Clinic program, which grew out of the increased demand for medical services, now visits up to 24 surrounding villages, treating at least 40 patients per visit. Our nurses, who announce their arrival over a microphone attached to TEWFI's vehicle, administer first aid and advice on things such as nutrition and common diseases. Referrals are provided and transport is arranged for patients when considered appropriate by the nurses.



*Jones, the Social Worker 'in action' with some of the village women*

TEWFI's social worker accompanies the nurses on their visits. Her focus is to encourage local women to instigate and engage in discussions of current health topics. The topics covered include HIV, hygiene, menopause, diet, child rearing, the dangers of alcohol and tobacco, diabetes and the importance of vegetables in their diet. The regularity of the Mobile Clinic visits has enabled strong relationships to be formed amongst the nurses, social worker and villagers, encouraging female empowerment, participation and a positive sense of community involvement.

Now down to the business side of the newsletter:  
Day Sponsorships: \$200 per day for one or more nominated days each year – see [www.tewoaf.org.au](http://www.tewoaf.org.au)  
This is the daily running cost of UCH and UHCC and we have at present 167 days sponsored. It would be truly great if the remaining 198 days in the year were sponsored.



### TEWFI STAFF

Two Family Fellow members have paid the wages for the UCH Home In-charge House Mother and the School Teacher at the Alamparai Primary School for the last several years. Another Family Fellow is paying for the UCH tutorial classes six evenings a week. This ongoing financial support has given TEWOAF long term and consistent support. Other TEWOAF supporters and/or Family Fellows might pursue this same objective and pay for one or several staff members with a commitment over several years.

## EDUCATION

### Electronic Classroom



The logical extension of the 'Computer Wallah' project has been the conceptualisation of an 'electronic Classroom on Wheels' project. Sponsored by the Cognizant Foundation in India, a bus, designed by TEWFI and refitted into a networking classroom with LCD screen, whiteboard, projector and pull down trays for the netbooks, commenced working in May this year. The first stage of the project will be piloted in two villages in Edaikazhinadu Panchayat. The bus, equipment and modifications, along with 14 netbooks, will be extended to another 22 villages.

### Our overall cost per year

One UHCC nurse costs \$1700.00:  
UCH each cook: \$1200.00:  
One watchman: \$1200.00:  
One cleaner: \$520.00:  
Each House carer: \$975.00:  
Gardeners: \$1040.00:  
The VSeC Systems Administrator: \$3217.00  
ICT Instructors each: \$1137.00.  
The TEWFI Driver costs \$2047.00  
Administrative Assistants each \$1900.00.  
UCH Children: The children at UCH constantly need school bags, sandals, school uniforms and school books.  
New Family Fellowship members: \$3300 per family (at present we have 68).  
See [www.tewoaf.org.au](http://www.tewoaf.org.au)  
14 netbooks: Each \$350 or \$5000 collectively for the electronic Classroom on Wheels (eCoW).  
The Cognizant Foundation has funded the first 10.

## Major Funding Required

Major funding is required for:

- 1) \$600 Community Dish Cooker. This is an alternative to biogas.
- 2) Windmill and/or Solar Water Pump. To replace the current pumps for bore and rainwater. Both have a 1kW capacity and the solar pump has the advantage of mains power back up. Solar Water Pump: A\$720. Windmill Water Pump: A\$550
- 3) \$15,000 Rainwater Harvesting. Double the size of the existing Rainwater Harvesting System from the tiles roof of the existing Dormitory buildings.
- 4) \$25,000 Biogas system. Suitable for the project using cow dung from 10 cows: 2 X 100 Kg Units (Total Volume 6m<sup>2</sup>).
- 5) \$19,000 Generator. Suitable for the UCH and the Vicki Standish eEducation Centre.

Volunteers are welcome to be part of the TEWOAF committee and/or the *Thursday Working Group* or to assist in adhoc projects or activities or be available to be called in for short periods of time. If interested, please contact Mrudula Girdhar, who will add your name to the volunteer support list.

**EDUCATION**

To ensure the children at UCH are given a high quality of education, an educational enrichment program, complementary to what is taught at school, has been developed. This involves the employment of local school teachers who travel to UCH six evenings a week to conduct classes for the UCH children. One teacher is assigned to three to six children. Weekly tests monitor the children's progress and the effectiveness of this program. The program's success has resulted in the children obtaining better results or progress at their local schools. Computer classes assist the programs, which are held at TEWFI's Vicki Standish e-Education Centre (VSeEC) adjacent to UCH.



It is clear that many children in the communities are in need of the same additional educational opportunities. The low literacy skills in the pre-school and primary school children are often due to the inaccessibility of dedicated teachers; poor student/teacher ratios and illiterate parents. Many parents do not have the means or education to provide appropriate educational tuition for their children. These students are therefore unable to attain reasonable Middle or High School levels.

To address this issue, TEWFI's VSeEC staff collaborated with community leaders, teachers and headmasters at the local primary schools and now provide a mobile computer education service to six different local schools each week.



*Mrs Geetha supervising one of the children's tutoring classes at UCH*

The program, which TEWFI named 'Computer Wallah', primarily focuses on the provision at the schools of computer-aided education with software to 4th and 5th standard students. A TEWFI teacher and an assistant engage the students in interactive computer programs covering science, maths, general knowledge, English and Tamil.

Children from rural communities are greatly disadvantaged because of the difficulty in accessing effective tuition in the English medium. This prevents children from rural communities from getting effective tertiary education and from participating in the most important sectors of India's rapidly expanding economy. TEWFI's volunteers have devised classes, after school hours, for around 50 children in the community. Divided into three standard groups, the volunteers employ flash cards, work sheets, group discussion, drawing and literacy games to motivate the students. Their contact with the volunteers also encourages cross-cultural interests.

Last year senior community leaders approached TEWFI for English lessons also. Kerrie Carstensen, a volunteer from Melbourne, conducted this program. Three villagers eagerly attended hour-long classes (which often went for two hours!) for five days a week to develop their conversational English skills.

At the end of the nine-week program the men were able to converse in a basic manner about their workday, their lives, their families and aspirations. They also read English newspapers in the classes and discussed content. The classes were a chance for influential village members to experience the work of the Foundation in a more direct way. Plans are in place for his particular class to be continued by Kerrie offering to take lessons via Skype. It will be an interesting use of this communication technology.



VSeEC is open to local students, primary school teachers, unemployed local youths and primary school students. Programs provide computer aided learning facilities, basic computer training classes and educational software, which motivates self-directed learning.

TEWFI continues to fund one full time teacher at the Alamparai primary school and is preparing to fund a full time English teacher at the Kadapakkam primary school. TEWFI's social workers have initiated local career guidance programs, student counselling and non-formal education programs in the senior the Kadapakkam High School.



**CHILD RIGHTS & RELIEF**

TEWFI has always had a primary focus on providing shelter and care to vulnerable girls and women. This focus has not diminished and currently 40 children, primarily girls, continue to be provided with shelter and care at the Uluru Children's Home (UCH). They attend the local primary and secondary schools and are all also participating in an intensive education program at UCH. The older children ride their bikes to school while the younger ones are driven, accompanied by Mrs Geetha, the UCH House Mother. The children are also rostered onto domestic duties.



*Sunday morning bike riding practice*



*UCH children preparing vegetables*



*Mrs Geetha with Sarita and Sugania who are in year 11 at Kadapakkam Secondary High School*



Two Masters from Pondicherry teach Bharatanatyam dance, Carnatic singing and Mridangam drumming during weekends. Such exposure to classical dance and music activities will develop the children's understanding and appreciation of southern Indian traditional culture. Last year some of the children were asked to participate in a cultural show performed in front of the community leaders, parents and the Teacher's Association at the local Kadapakkam High School where they attend.



*A group photo of the UCH children and staff on an excursion in Pondicherry*



*UCH children completing a karate session*

The children also participate in lively weekly karate classes under the Karate Master's direction. We already have a number of black belt holders with more on the way. Our girls have also won the local Karate team championship. As karate is both self-defence and requires discipline it is a positive way of reigning in the children's often lively and mischievous behaviour.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

TEWFI's staff is mostly from the local areas. TEWFI's ongoing training and development therefore ensures them with a stable future, which at the same time ensures TEWFI with a strong and co-operative team working in India.

*Jones, TEWFI social worker, addressing local community women who were participating in TEWFI's International Women's Day celebrations.*



*UCH cook Lalitha, resident cook Valliammal and Mobina the kitchen helper cater for all TEWFI's staff, children and visitors and have all been at TEWFI since its inception.*



*TEWFI administration staff: John Peter, Education Co-ordinator; Thenmozhi, Administrative Assistant and Usha, Accounts Assistant.*



Overall, TEWFI's two field social workers have developed activities in the villages that address HIV aid awareness programs; domestic violence awareness; life skills education; self help group meetings and women's health issues. Team games such as ball games, which also develop hand eye coordination and spatial sense, have broken down community barriers and set better examples for the younger people in the communities. It is aimed that the follow up programs will create better networks and understanding, previously missing from parts of the community.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There is an ongoing need to ensure that environmental best practice is behind all activities carried out by TEWFI. The recycling of waste for compost; the use of energy efficient light globes; rainwater harvesting; efficient use of all energy sources; home grown herbs and vegetables; judicious use of vehicles and equipment requiring electricity are just some of the way that the staff and children ensure their environment foot print is minimised.

UCH now boasts a garden of chillies, herbs, mangos and a variety of other vegetables, which supplement those bought from the local markets. Generating methane gas from cow dung is the next step, which could supplement the bottled cooking gas currently used. A cow shed currently being constructed will house 10 cows. Training in waste management and energy saving is being put into place with the UCH staff.

Programs have also been held in the villages to highlight the need to control waste and ensure waste is appropriately handled and together with Auroville ([www.auroville.org](http://www.auroville.org)), TEWFI has been instrumental in fledgling a waste recycling project. The Tamil Nadu government has given one and a half acres of land and the Asian Development Bank has provided funding toward this project. TEWFI is also working alongside Auroville to ensure the Coastal Environmental Education Centre, erected on TEWFI grounds, continues to be used by school children and villagers to learn about the coastal environment and habitat.



*Waste Management Centre*

TEWFI is also working cooperatively with Auroville to ensure the Coastal Environmental Education Centre continues to be used by school children and villagers to learn about the coastal environment and habitat. In support of this Tamil Nadu Forest Department has given into TEWFI's care an area of surrounding tropical dry evergreen forest for restoration and to also use for teaching purposes.

The almost pristine environment surrounding the TEWFI site is a precious national resource. We will continue to support TEWFI to work collaboratively with environmental organisations to safeguard it and to teach the community its value and significance.

## THANKS

TEWOAF thanks Lisa Boyd and Graham Smith from Seasol International, for their continuous support. Not only have they assisted in last years Annual Dinner Dance, but also in the John Shuster's highly successful annual Golf Day Event for which we also thank John, Judy Nutbean, Mark Lowan and Gwenda Flintoff. We also thank Annemaree Rowley's persistence in procuring Day Sponsors; Denise Hutchins for her tireless contribution to the Annual Dinner Dance, year after year and Arch Staver for his annual commitment to the Dinner Dance auction.

TEWOAF sincerely thank the volunteer committee, Megan Nutbean, Sophie Hardefeldt and Anna Scollay for their fantastic scrutinising of volunteers. But we now say au revoir to Anna and we welcome Jennie Chainey who has just joined the committee. Judy Nutbean has taken three months leave from TEWOAF and we wish her a well-deserved break. We say au revoir to Sue Morgan from the TEWOAF team and we welcome Kerrie Carstensen. We also say au revoir to Tory Anderson and Glenda Flintoff from TEWOAF staff and welcome Mrudula Giridhar, TEWOAF's newly appointed Administration Officer. We welcome too, Chris Nathan who has joined the Dinner Dance committee.

John Hutchins has been the TEWOAF Treasurer since its inception and it is with great sadness that John has decided to step back from this position due to the overload of work in his own Accounting practice. We know that TEWOAF can still rely on John to always be around for us when we need him.