

THE EAST · WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

News Letter

Issue 3. June 2007

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Welcome to Issue 3 of **The East West Overseas Aid Foundation** Newsletter. Things are busy as usual at the Foundation and we'd like send out a big thanks to you all. Your contribution is making a genuine difference to many lives.

Some sad news... On the 7th of May, The East West Foundation of India's first Administration Officer, Mr. N. Sivasubramanian, passed away, after a long service with the Foundation. The contribution made by 'Siva', as he was more fondly known, will be remembered for years to come – he worked tirelessly for the Foundation with a passion and a dedication that truly was an inspiration. Our thoughts and condolences are with his family at this sad time in their lives...

ULURU CHILDREN'S HOME

The 33 children at UCH continue to lead very busy lives with computer classes, karate lessons, music and drumming lessons, library visits, cooking and craft activities plus regular school attendance. No wonder they sleep well at the end of the day! Several of the girls recently spent some days at Nadukuppam as part of a holiday camp organised by Auroville. The girls loved the experience, enjoying this opportunity to experience life outside Alamparai. Also recently, Uluru's eldest girl celebrated her 14th birthday with cake, candles and her first sari!



CELEBRATIONS AT ULURU... Congratulations to Chitra and Chandran on their Sashtiabthapoorthi celebrations in March. The children and staff were all provided with new outfits for this special occasion. Also on this day, the second dormitory – The Dr. K. T. Ganapathy Building – was officially opened and a plaque honouring the invaluable contribution made by TEWOAF's pro-bono architect Sandra Nervegna, and her team, was unveiled.

A Focus on Education...

The East West Overseas Aid Foundation is working with the Alamparai community to improve the education currently offered at the only school in the village – the Government primary school. Like many rural Government schools, the Alamparai school offers a very poor quality of education as a consequence of numerous factors such as inadequate resources and poor teacher attendance. The East West Foundation hopes to work with school staff, local Panchayat members, the school's PTA; as well as various other organisations and individuals with relevant knowledge and experience, to transform the school into a quality educational institution where all children of Alamparai have the opportunity to receive a stimulating, valuable and well-rounded education. It is hoped that with some serious investment of time, energy, funds and resources – and much team-work – Alamparai will become a model school offering a high quality education to the children of the area. It is

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hoped that the school will come to provide a dynamic education which will cater for many learning styles, strive to meet the individual needs of each student, and be relevant to the needs of local community. It is hoped that the students will be provided with an educational environment that is nurturing and stimulating, providing each child with the opportunity to develop into a confident, capable and well-adjusted individual.

Current Actions... We are finally ready to begin construction of the school fence, with the local Panchayat committing the funds for 25% of construction costs. Once this is completed an outdoor cooking/dining facility will be constructed to enable the daily meal to be of a higher nutritional value and to be prepared in a more hygienic fashion.

Donate towards Education... and make a genuine contribution to the future of these children. Please visit www.tewaof.org.au for more information on how you can assist.



e-Education Centre

TEWOAF is collaborating with **Engineers Without Borders (EWB)** to improve the educational and employment opportunities for the children of Alamparai, through the design and construction of our **e-Education Centre (eEC)**. Construction of the centre commenced in March, with an official opening expected by the end of the year. The eEC will provide IT education to the children at Uluru Children's Home, as well as those from the wider community. Located at the Home, the Centre will be a first for the region and will feature 34 PC work stations. The facility will cater for the long-term educational needs of the children based at Uluru and will be accessible to children



and adults from surrounding villages. Due to a shortfall of funds for construction, the initial plan - which includes project rooms and an administration wing - has been temporarily cut back so that at least basic IT education facilities for the children and community can be completed as soon as possible. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this project, with particular thanks, as always, to our friends at EWB for their constant support, and to The Victoria League for their ongoing assistance. For more information on the eEC please visit www.tewaof.org.au OR www.ewb.org.au.

Sponsor a workstation! The Foundation is currently raising money for the purchase of necessary hardware and software for the Centre. The cost of each functional PC, equipped with hardware, software and accompanied by appropriate furniture is an estimated AU\$700. Please contact the Foundation if you would like to sponsor a workstation.

Coastal Eco-Education Centre...

The Coastal Eco-Education Centre is soon to be built on Foundation land in affiliation with the Pitchandikulam Forests Bio Resource Centre and the Auroville community. This Centre will contribute to local children experiencing a more dynamic education, and will ensure the sustainability of the local coastal environment and the livelihoods of people within it. Based on the very good results achieved at the Government High School in Nadukuppam, it is hoped that a traditional education will be combined with an environmental one where students will learn about coastal ecology as well as sustainable fishing and farming techniques. For more information please visit the following websites: www.auroville.org/environment/pitch_brc.htm; www.auroville.org/journals&media/avtoday/March_2005/village_experiment.htm

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ULURU HEALTH CARE CENTRE & POST-TSUNAMI HEALTH CARE AND RESEARCH PROJECT (PTHCRP)

The Uluru Health Care Centre (UHCC) continues to be very busy, seeing an average of 1250 patients each month. The medical team also sees many additional people during visits to surrounding tsunami-affected villages as part of the PTHCRP. The Clinic's full-time doctor continues to do a wonderful job and has been very active in improving the services offered by the clinic. Dr. Selvam is also recruiting a female medical officer, who will be responsible for attending to women's health - an area in need of attention. Another issue faced by clinic staff is the difficulty in ensuring patients act on referrals for further medical attention - in the majority of cases patients are unable to make the necessary travel arrangements. However thanks to



the recent donation of a Maruti van, this issue will soon be resolved, with transport to be provided by the Clinic. Recent items purchased or donated to the clinic include an ECG machine, BP machines, a needle destroyer, a nebuliser, surgical instruments, a patient examination table, linen, new rubber under-sheets and sterilizing equipment. Each of these acquisitions will enhance the quality of care offered at the Clinic. The Foundation was also fortunate to acquire an additional 1.5 acres of land surrounding UHCC, and is hoping to extend the Clinic to include a Maternity Clinic, X-Ray facilities and accommodation for staff and volunteers.

Community Library...

Plans for the construction of a Community Library have been drawn, and it is hoped that the Library will be completed in 2008. Here students and other members of the community will be able to access books and information on a wide variety of topics. Not only is this hoped to improve literacy in the area, but will also provide access to relevant and useful information to enhance local knowledge and to provide practical information that can assist locals in their daily lives. This may be in the form of learning new skills to improve livelihoods, seeking employment, accessing Government information, gaining important health information, etc. A team of volunteers from Sydney, 'The Holy Cow Project', are fundraising for this initiative. For more info please see www.tewoaf.org.au.

Volunteers...



The past six months have been a particularly busy time at UCH/UHCC, with a large increase in inquiries about visiting and volunteering with the Foundation. In the first three months of 2007 alone we have accommodated **49 visitors / volunteers / students!!!** A group of supporters will look at this issue in the coming months to determine the optimal numbers to be accommodated in the future in an effort to minimise the disruption at Uluru. We are also investigating alternative off-site accommodation options. Presently the Foundation is giving preference to educators and longer stay applicants.

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AUSTRALIAN NEWS

Glenunga International High School & The Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship

TEWOAF has been invited to visit Adelaide on several occasions in recent months, attending meetings with members of The Victoria League and staff and students at Glenunga. The students are planning to raise funds for the Uluru Children's Home, with a potential field trip planned for 2008. They are being kindly assisted by The Victoria League who plan to help the students with their fundraising initiatives.

Mt. Margaret Remote Community School in Western Australia - TEWOAF was recently contacted by the principal of this small indigenous school in Mt. Margaret, who was interested in developing a relationship between the children at her school and those at Uluru. The Mt. Margaret children are working hard writing letters, stories and making a video about their community to be sent to UCH. The girls (and boys!) at Uluru will no doubt be very excited to receive this material and we look forward to a long-lasting friendship between the children.

SECOND ANNUAL PLANNING WORKSHOP - TEWOAF's second annual planning workshop took place on May 6th, with great success. For a summary of the day's outcomes, please contact the Foundation: admin@tewoaf.org.au, (03)9650-0514.

15TH ANNUAL DINNER DANCE - Due to the overwhelming popularity of last year's event at The Windsor, the TEWOAF 15th Annual Dinner Dance has been moved to a bigger venue - Nine Darling Street in South Yarra. And for the very first time, we're having an Indian theme! So grab your saris, kurtas and dancing shoes and help us raise funds for our work overseas. You'll enjoy an Indian banquet, Bollywood dancing, a silent auction and a selection of fantastic raffle prizes. To make sure you secure a ticket for this year's event, fill out the ticket order on the back of the enclosed invitation and send it to us ASAP. See you there!



Call to action... Calling all supporters! We need to source a large number of goods and services to offer as raffle and auction items at our annual dinner dance. If you think you are may be able to contribute items for this year's event, please contact us: (03)96500514; admin@tewoaf.org.au.

DAY SPONSORSHIP MOVIE FUNDRAISER - Shake off those winter blues by joining us at our Day Sponsorship Movie Fundraiser on July 22 at Cinema Como in Toorak. Guests will enjoy Indian afternoon tea while learning about our innovative **Day Sponsorship Program**. For more information please visit www.tewoaf.org.au. For tickets call (03) 96500514 or email admin@tewoaf.org.au. Tickets are limited so get in early!



'Children of Uluru' CALENDARS - The Foundation's 2008 'Children of Uluru' calendar features beautiful glossy images of the gorgeous children of UCH. These stunning wall calendars make a fantastic gift and can be purchased by calling the Melbourne office on (03)650-0514 or email: admin@tewoaf.org.au. All profits from the sale of these calendars will be used to help The East West Overseas Aid Foundation meet its charter.

ONLINE DONATIONS - The East West Overseas Aid Foundation now accepts donations at www.tewoaf.org.au, using the secure engine Our Community. Don't forget donations to TEWOAF are tax-deductible and the end of financial year is almost here!

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

As our work to help the poor and disadvantaged expands, our running costs continue to rise. By supporting TEWOAF you are helping to improve the lives of those less fortunate. To donate, please see the enclosed form or visit www.tewoaf.org.au.

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"A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit". D. Elton Trueblood

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