Uniting women to take action for the moral education and healing of our families and society.

NGO in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

Women's Federation for World Peace

Oceania Newsletter 1/2017

From the Regional Office

There is a buzz at the office, WFWP Oceania is sending 8 delegates to New York for the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations (CSW61) http://research.un.org/en/CSW61 This year our delegates represent Australia and the Solomon Islands. We are especially proud to be sending 4 young women leaders who will also attend a young women's retreat, focusing on raising future women leaders. Our next newsletter will have reports from our participants.

We are pleased to announce that we have now launched two new service projects: a scholarship program for young adults who desire to finish high school and gain university education, but do not have the funds to realise their dream, and scholarships for high school students whose parents cannot afford their high school fees and would otherwise drop out of school; and secondary, a micro-credit program for young women. Our first scholarship recipient has already gained an offer at the Solomon Islands National University. We will hear more from her as she progresses through her teaching course. These programs evolved from discussion with the Board of WFWP Solomon Islands when I visited our members there in late December. One of our big strengths is the ability to serve real needs at the grass roots level through cooperation and networking with our WFWP Chapters in the Islands.

Warmest wishes, Anne Bellavance

Reflections from the Region

The following are some reflections given by participants during activities in Victoria.

Dignity Forum

The forum opened my eyes to some of the challenges of people in my community and gave me ways to offer support and referrals to those in need.
A wonderful day of sharing, caring and fun.
Moved by dignity for homeless women.
Gathering like-minded individuals in one room and sharing ideas on how to move forward is really inspiring.

UN International Day of Peace Conference

A foundation for peace is shared God-cantered values upon which we can build.
The conference brought people together from various cultures, religions and traditions under the banner of a shared goal of peace; speaking the same language – one in heart.
There is no peace if there is no equal justice – the forum was very empowering.
It is an opportunity to stop what we are doing and focus on world peace.
Fantastic – teachings was up to date and informative.
There is a need to continually engage people around the world with peace activities.
An enriching experience; good dialogue.
Peace does not come without effort and it is not the other person's responsibility.
Small efforts need to keep on; they make a difference.

CONTENTS

From the Regional Office 1
Reflections from the Field 1
Overview of WFWP activities 2
News from the Oceania Chapters
Australia
Victoria 3
New South Wales 6
Queensland 10
Solomon Islands 11
Contact Us 13

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

Board Retreat

The WFWP Victoria Board members came together in the countryside on a lovely January Saturday in Emerald to review our previous years' work and plan for 2017. A morning breakout and evaluation session on our activities and events throughout 2016 allowed us to reflect on what worked well, what did not work well, what we learnt, what we are happy about, what we are concerned about and what next.

Cameo Cinema experience

As a determination for the year 2017, our board members committed to raise the profile and interest in the WFWP events to support service projects in the Pacific islands, as well as investing into reaching out to new people and connecting with communities with the same values as WFWP.

After lunch the items under discussion were a report on the CSW61 in New York that a number of our WFWP members in Oceania are attending and the explanation of the new WFWP International Vision and Mission statements.

This was followed with the planning for the WFWP Oceania leadership Retreat for 2018. Here, our passionate board members connected their hearts to create an event able to inspire young leaders to discover their own identity as women, and feel empowered for their mission in WFWP Oceania. To achieve this, particular emphasis will be put on character and leadership skills development. Though sharing, in this mixed generation environment, young adults will be able to benefit from the wisdom of older leaders.

The meeting continued with a discussion about prospective Island Projects including a micro-credit initiative and a scholarship program that came from discussion with the Boards of Queensland and Solomon Islands during Anne's recent visit. Our board members examined possible ways to make both initiatives

Board meeting

sustainable programmes. They are currently working on selection criteria, which will assess the candidate's commitment to investing back in the Solomon chapter and their ability to support the work of WFWP in Solomon Islands.

To conclude, our members discussed the planning and fine tuning of the 2017 Victoria Calendar of Events. Our retreat concluded with a movie evening and dinner together.

Brainstorm session

Dinner treat

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.

Second-hand Clothes Set to Sail to Solomon Islands

WFWP Victoria, in partnership with Anonymous X, prepared second-hand clothing and books for delivery to a shipping warehouse ready for shipment to the WFWP Solomon Islands. This endeavour is part of WFWP Australia's service projects and came after a request from WFWP Solomon Islands for second-hand clothing to complement their women's sewing centre.

Anonymous X is a charity that consists of a team of volunteers who share a common belief, that they can make a difference and create a change for the homeless and less fortunate in Melbourne. Sean Thornton founded the organisation in 2013. He and his volunteer support staff help identify people in need and then organise the distribution of practical support, through donations of toiletries, food items, clothes, toys and other essential items. http://www.anonymousx.com.au/

WFWP Victoria bought the second-hand clothing that was not suitable for distribution to people living on the streets of Melbourne, thereby supporting Anonymous X in the process. We would like to wholeheartedly thank the volunteers from Anonymous X for helping to box, prepare and load the boxes onto the truck, ready for shipment.

Anne Bellavance with Anonymous X volunteers loading

Unloading at the shipping company

New South Wales

Empowering Women For Leadership Workshop
February 23-26, 2017
at Collaroy Centre, Collaroy Beach, NSW 20127

The *Empowering Women for Leadership Workshop* was very well received by participants, who enjoyed discovering new ideas about Emotional Intelligence, Leadership and Working with Teams from the two facilitators, Siti Hamidah Bahashwan and Esther Lay. Two participants were so inspired they requested for a facilitator to conduct future training in their community.

AHA moments in participants' own words:

1. *In the game of "Blue and Red Ribbons" led by Esther I learned that relaxing helped. Although I had no idea how to solve the problem, I just learned to trust the others.*
2. *There are so many ways to solve a problem when I am open to others' help.*
3. *I can make mistakes over and over again, and I can learn from my mistakes. Eventually, I know now not to lose patience with myself.*
4. *The world can be interpreted in two or more ways. Motivation is most important.*
5. *Focus, listen to others and recognize we have to learn new things.*
6. *I have learned to relax when under pressure.*
7. *I have learnt to let someone else lead and take control.*
8. *To think like a child.*
9. *To solve conflicts always be in a relaxed state, change my mind by breathing in and letting it out (strongly) six times. To hug people, heart to heart. To find true self – look to your heart in a mirror – not outside the mirror.*
10. *Stay focused and forgive. Concentrate. Forgive. No prejudice.*
11. *To stay positive, remove negativity*
12. *You-tube has many good lessons (I will use it for teachable moments.)*
13. *It helped me to reflect in more detail on my inner life, in terms of my deepest core identity. I hadn't been able to reach in that deeply, by myself, before, despite serious effort to do so.*
14. *The lessons by both Hamidah and Esther, through the activities, were very helpful, as it's easier to remember and practise the lessons we felt with our bodies. I would like to have, if possible, more such activities in future workshops.*

Program Content & Methodology

- Emotional Intelligence (EI) principles and strategies
- Leadership Styles and Skills

- Conflict Resolution principles and skills

Participants were kept engaged through various activities which included short presentation on Emotional Intelligence and Great Leadership and videos and music. Lessons were learned experientially through body-mind-soul connections via many fun activities and games, which helped participants incorporate the lessons and become inspired to do more to learn, relearn and unlearn after the workshop.

Facilitators' comments

- Participants were aware and committed to practise and further develop Emotional Intelligence Skills in their daily personal and professional lives. They expressed their understanding and willing to do their part to lead with the heart (Emotional Intelligence).
- Participants also appreciated the skills and strategies on great leadership and the steps to improve on how they communicate to their children, family and friends.
- Participants were willing to share real life experiences, taking the brave steps to self-disclosure for personal and professional development. A few participants demonstrated courage in letting go of past hurt and were willing to start afresh, taking each day at a time, giving their best to make it meaningful and to be more positive and brave to make mistakes in order to learn. (Mistakes are learning experiences)

Suggestions for future workshops

1. To have a bigger group (30–50 participants) as the content and the experiential learning methodology is very effective in bringing about transformation
2. To have a session on "Courageous Conversation"
3. To have more in-depth personal transformation demonstration
4. To have more participants from other communities – women from multi-cultural background
5. To co-organise it with women organisations from other communities

Report prepared by Hamidah Bahashwan and Aila Willitts

WFWP Women's leadership workshop participants Feb 2017

WFWP Women's leadership workshop training session Feb 2017

WFWP Women's leadership workshop training Feb 2017

WFWP Women's leadership workshop mealtime sharing Feb 2017

NSW AGM

The AGM for the NSW Chapter was held on November 28th. Anne Bellavance, International Vice President for Oceania, took time from her busy schedule to attend and share with us the developments that have taken place in Victoria. We were inspired to hear about the volunteer program that is producing good results, and also Anne shared with us the Governance Policy Manual which clarifies our roles as board members.

We received the NSW President, Secretary and Treasurer's reports for the year and the outcome of our election is that all officers will hold their positions once again for 2017 with the exception of Debra Bruce who has resigned as secretary/treasurer. Silvana Daly is the new treasurer and that is wonderful as she has a well-spring of knowledge to share and so much enthusiasm. We are confident that the new board will make a wonderful contribution in 2017.

Our first project for 2017 will be a seminar on Peace Negotiation, which will be in February. We are hoping that 25 guests will come. We will be advertising on Meet Up to reach out to the wider community and of course by word of mouth.

Silvana Daly will be researching prices for reading glasses that will be sent to Vanuatu. These glasses are very useful for the village women's sewing groups.

We will continue to network with other women's groups in the coming year to promote world peace and encourage youth to take more responsibility as well. 2017 will be a great year.

Report by Debra Bruce

(Editor's Note: The NSW committee and members wish to thank Debra Bruce for her invaluable and dedicated work with WFWP over many year and we wish her well.)

Queensland

WFWP QLD Christmas and End-of-Year Celebration

WFWP Queensland had a beautiful end-of-year and Christmas celebration with WFWP members and many new guests, on 7 December 2017. The cosy room at Harmony on Carmody was decorated in a Christmas theme.

The program commenced with Aborigine Elder Aunty Heather Castledine 's Acknowledgement of Country.

Then MC Mamiko Rattley welcomed everyone, especially new guests from War Widows Guild QLD and other organisations. She thanked Gail Ker of Access CS and Harmony on Carmody Cafe for their support in providing the venue for us.

The first guest speaker was Anne Bellavance, National President of WFWP Australia who came from Melbourne to attend this event. She gave an inspiring presentation on the mission and objectives of WFWP and its worldwide and local activities.

The second guest speaker was Gail Ker OAM. She gave a moving talk with video and the background music *Imagine*. She shared some of the heartbreaking stories she has heard directly from refugee women at UNHCR conferences and encouraged us to think about these displaced, abused women who are struggling to survive in hopeless situations, and to search for an effective way to support them.

We enjoyed a delicious dinner, sang Christmas carols and played a fun trivia game.

At the end we drew raffle tickets to raise funds for the preschool of WFWP Solomon Islands. In addition, many participants brought children's books for the school.

It was a joyful and inspiring Christmas and end-of-year celebration.

Report by Mamiko Rattley

Solomon Islands

REPORT ON ONE DAY WORKSHOP 10.12.2016

The Women's Federation for World Peace Solomon Islands was pleased to have Anne Bellavance, WFWPI Vice-President representing the Oceania region, visit the WFWP Solomon Islands from 9 to 12 December 2016. The main activity held was the WFWPSI one-day 'Turn the Curve' workshop, where we set strategic priorities for 2017.

left to right) Jessie Pita Belana, Alice Hou, Anne Bellavance, Selina Galo, Josephine Teakeni

Workshop Aims

The workshop was aimed at empowering women with the knowledge and tools to support the needs of women to create peace at home, peace in our communities and peace throughout the world. Thus programs held at WFWPSI seek to attract women in various fields, with knowledge and skills, high potential and a commitment to serve the development needs of the WFWP and country as a whole. The programs are intended to strengthen participants' knowledge and understanding of the environmental and family issues affecting the family, and to enable them to cultivate leadership skills, approaches and networks to make meaningful contributions to family, community, nation, region and global as a whole.

(left to right) Nellie Masuaku, Jessie Pita Belana, Selina Galo, Anne Bellavance, Sannie Mete

Workshop Outcomes

The workshop was very inspiring, fruitful and successful as we set Strategic Priorities Tools as a guide for WFWPSI to move forward effectively in 2017. This assisted participants to have clear responsibilities and priorities within the WFWPSI, with clear goals, objectives and roles. Thus this workshop empowered women to boost their participation and strengthen responsibilities within the WFWPSI as it sets clear WFWPSI Strategic Priorities.

This workshop also gave so much hope for the WFWPSI as the Regional Headquarter for WFWP Oceania has been given the opportunity to support the WFWPSI with micro-projects and scholarships. These will enhance, empower and boost women's knowledge and skills in creating self-peace, peace in the family, peace in the community, peace in the region and peace in the world.

Workshop Conclusion

The speeches and presentations at the workshop were eye-opening and truly empowered WFWPSI. The brainstorming sessions to set Strategic Priorities for 2017 was essential and will help us to 'Turn the Curve' in our work this year and move forward.

Testimonies/Feedback from The 1-Day Workshop

10th December 2016 - Nellie Masuaku

Selina receiving the DVD projector

In the history of WPWP in the Solomon Islands, this is the first time to experience such a moving workshop with Anne Bellavance, WFWPI Vice-President representing the Ocean region.

From the workshop I have gained deep understanding of my responsibility and heart connection with Anne and clear vision of WFWP. Thus I was touched with more encouraging, uplifting and clear strategic plans that were set during the workshop.

Now in the Solomon Islands our goal is to achieve vision 2020. So Anne Bellavance's visit is so timely and WFWPSI is on a new level of progress. Also I would like to thank the Australia WPWP members for their continuous support. We gained a lot and hope this kind of visit should continue in the future.

Turn the Curve workshop participants

From Joyce Warousu

From the one-day workshop with Anne Bellavance, Solomon women now know what we did not know for the past years since the existence of WFWP in the country. It was eye-opening for me personally – so fulfilling, satisfying and spirit refreshing. Regardless of where we come from or where we are living, we all try to work hard and try our best with dignity as women and God's daughters.

With Anne Bellavance and the women structuring the strategic plan for Solomon Islands for 2017, I was filled with tears, and in my heart I was kind of feeling 'Wow this is what I wanted to do during the past years but I just did not know where and how to do.' Reflecting on my family and my life as a whole, this is what I was born to do, that is, to live, lead and serve others. Thus, women are not just to remain as housewife sweeping the floors and mopping the kitchen, but we have to stand bold and find our value and dignity. With our feminine power we can do all things.

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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.