

# YOU HAVE A FRIEND INC

## IN THIS EDITION ~

- ♦ From the President
- ♦ About our Charity
- ♦ Our Veggies and their contributions
- ♦ Refugees & War
- ♦ Global Poverty
- ♦ Facts & Figures
- ♦ Support our cause and our sponsors

## ISSUE 9 ~ July 2011

P.O.Box 637, Tweed Heads, NSW 2485

Our website [www.youhaveafriend.org.au](http://www.youhaveafriend.org.au)

A homeless person is homeless  
Because they do not have a place to live  
.....Think about it.....

**Brisbane Star  
Cruises**



**ISLAND STYLE  
PROMOTIONS**

## Mother's Day 2011



## This Edition



**Charity News**

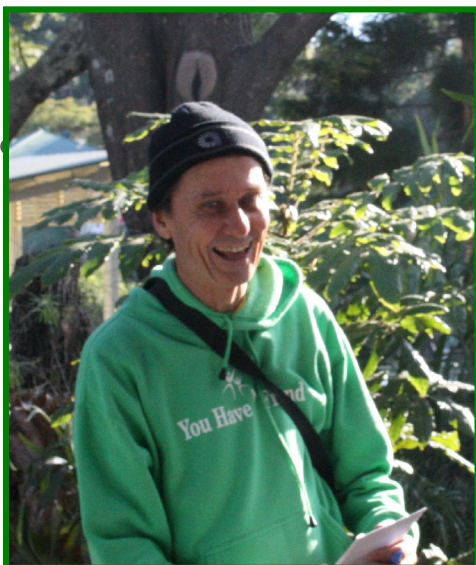
**Our Volunteers**

**Global Poverty**

**Refugees and War**

**LIGHT AND LAUGHTER**

"People are not homeless because they are physically disabled, mentally ill, abusers of alcohol or other drugs... or unemployed.  
These conditions do not explain homelessness...."



# About our Charity

Our goals are simple. As Mother Theresa once said "If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one".

Our charity would not reach so many people were it not for the support of our amazing volunteers. How true it is as DeAnne Hollis noted, "The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others".

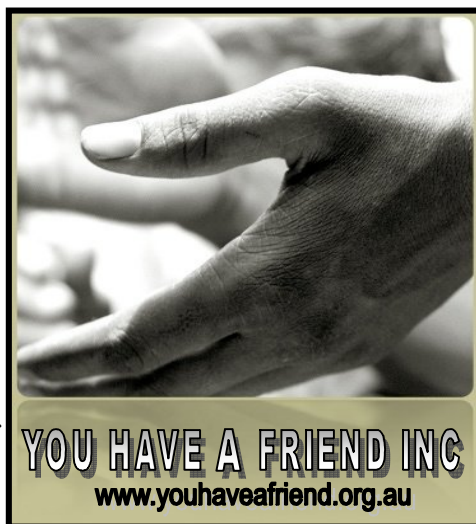
We do not have an office where homeless people congregate. No, our office is the streets and parks where we provide meals, love and support. And it is not only the volunteers who provide support, but the community of the Tweed District have embraced and supported us in so many ways. Five primary schools collect tinned food and clothing for the homeless while students from two senior colleges join us each week at our street meals for the homeless. In addition a number of churches regularly donate food and clothing to our cause.

My focus is still on a "drop-in centre" for our homeless people in the Tweed. A centre that the homeless people can come to, have a shower, wash clothes, a cuppa and most of all know someone cares for them. I recently met federal, state and local member to discuss the plight of the homeless here in Tweed Heads. At the time of writing I

am hopeful that after three years perseverance, a number of private and government organisations have accepted there is a need for a "drop-in-centre" and are currently discussing options.

As already stated I cannot but help feeling a sense of immense pride that I am president and founder of a charity with such wonderful volunteers working to support such a worthy cause and knowing the community has accepted our charity and so generously support us. In addition, knowing a number of schools and colleges have accepted us as their social charity, is most satisfying. Thank you Tweed for seeing the homeless and marginalised in your area and doing something for these people. Always remember, many have simply not had a chance in life – we can make a difference.

**John Lee ~ PHP**



## From the President.

Returning one evening from Murwillumbah after a recent street outreach, it came to me how many people that day our charity, "You Have A Friend", had supported with a meal, tinned food, loaves of bread, clothes, blankets, sleeping bags and many other necessary items. I realised too the amazing love and respect our wonderful volunteers and school children provide our disadvantaged friends. It is a love I know helps in so many ways to make these people's lives bearable knowing someone cares for them. It is a love given quietly each in their own way.

On the 1 May 2011 "You Have A Friend" celebrated its third birthday having developed in three years from just six members, to one of over 60 volunteers and providing over 300 meals each week to the homeless and marginalised in the Tweed district. In addition we support four caravan parks, a housing commission unit and many single parent families.

## The Court Outreach

Our "Coffee Shop" at Tweed Heads Court continues to flourish. Our teas, coffees, drinks, sandwiches, cake and chocolates all help people to fill in their waiting time at the Court, and at the same time help us to support the homeless. We are often thanked by customers grateful for the comfort that a cup of coffee gives them during what is so often a very stressful experience. With Val and Maria holding the fort on alternate Tuesdays and Lorraine on Mondays, the YHAF presence is a permanent one there when the Court is open.. I would like to thank the Court staff for their friendliness and their continuing support for YHAF.

**Lorraine Sterry**

## **A Week in the Life of You Have A Friend**

Every day of the week, "You Have A Friend" supports the homeless and marginalised people of the Tweed District. We provide love, kindness, food, clothing, advice on services available and if possible, support with accommodation. Over 300 meals a week are served to our friends in the local parks. Tinned food, bread, clothing and blankets are also distributed to those at the street outreaches as well as distributed to caravan parks, units and single parent families. The food we serve as well as that provided in hampers is generously donated by a number of butchers, supermarkets, fruiterers, school children, churches, organisations and the general public in Coolangatta, Tweed Heads, Kingscliff and Murwillumbah.

Below is listed a summary of events that drive our week, but it is almost impossible to provide a total appreciation of the dedication and time so many of our wonderful volunteers provide in the support of the friends we support.

### **Sunday**

The **Sunday Breakfast Outreach** starts our week with breakfast in the parks at Coolangatta, Chinderah and Murwillumbah. Volunteers arrive at our hall where we prepare the food, pack the three vans and then head to the parks. Brekkie consists of cereal, sausages, eggs, onions, tomatoes and bread, washed down with unlimited tea, coffee or milo. In all a total of around 15 volunteers provide the wonderful breakfasts to over 100 people each Sunday.

### **Monday**

1. **Monday Court Outreach** provides a most necessary service to those appearing at court. Within the foyer, we have a small area where our dedicated volunteers sell drinks and chocolates and for a gold coin donation, provide sandwiches to those appearing in court.

2. **Monday Caravan Food Drop** involves distribution from our vans of day old bread and other items from Woolworths to caravan parks in the Chinderah area.

3. **Monday's Street Outreach** is conducted in the park in Coolangatta. Here our volunteers provide a most healthy meal of sausages, pies, veggies and often dishes cooked by any one of the volunteers. Muffins are always provided by The Muffin Break Coolangatta. At Monday night street outreaches we are joined by teachers and Year 11 and 12 students from St. Joseph's College in Banora Point. This outreach can vary in number from 20 to 50 of our friends.

### **Tuesday**

1. **Tuesday Court Outreach** is again offering a service the same as that we provide on Mondays.

2. **Tuesday Food Drop** involves distribution from our vans of day old bread and other items from Woolworths to caravan parks in the Murwillumbah area.

3. **Tuesday Murwillumbah Outreach** is a similar meal delivered in the main park in Murwillumbah. Here too, our faithful volunteers provide wonderful and exciting meals each week. Tuesday in Murwillumbah is the turn of the teachers and students from Mount St. Patrick's College in Murwillumbah to join us on the streets.

### **Wednesday**

**Wednesday Food Drop** involves distribution from our vans of day old bread and other items from Woolworths to caravan parks in the Chinderah and Tweed areas.

### **Thursday**

**Thursday Murwillumbah Lunch BBQ** is faithfully run each week by a most dedicated team of people in the local area and very well supported by the Murwillumbah Community Centre who allows us the use of their facilities. All food is most generously donated by local butchers and fruit shops. Here each week, one of our volunteers provides a Bingo day and soon to start a "Woman's Pamper Day".



## **Saturday**

**1. Saturday Food Drop** once more involves collection of food from Woolworths as well as a number of local fruiterers and butchers for distribution and use over the coming weekend. Our dedicated volunteers travel to units in West Tweed where the food and clothing items are greatly appreciated by the residents.

**2. Saturday Night Outreach** once more sees us distributing generously donated pizzas from Dominoes Pizzas in South Tweed Heads as well as muffins donated by The Muffin Break in Coolangatta to our friends in Coolangatta.

Were it not for the intense behind the scenes involvement by our 60 plus volunteers, the above would not be possible. Nothing is too much for these wonderful people. Always ready to support by way of driving vans to collect food, cooking meals, packing containers ready for the outreaches and sorting clothes. We have a very dedicated group of volunteers who spend a great deal of time distributing and emptying collection tins on a weekly basis to assist us for much needed essential finance. Being a registered charity, audits and financial transactions are a large part of the organisation and once more volunteers support with expertise many have in the finance industry.

Local schools within the district are also most compassionate. Were it not for the dedication of the many teachers and principals involved, much of what we provide our homeless by way of warm clothing and food hampers would not be possible.

Last but by no means least, we are so appreciative of the support many local people show towards the homeless and marginalised. Through churches and other organisations many financial and clothing donations are most generously donated.

May God Bless and keep you and your families and know your wonderful acts are ultimately towards your fellow man, woman and child. Many who have not had a chance in life.

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### **From St Joseph's Parish Schools ~**

**'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.' *Matthew 5:15-17***

Each of the the three schools of St Joseph's Parish, St Joseph's and St James Primary and St Joseph's College try to live the Christian faith not by words alone but also by action. It is vitally important to convey this message to our students and provide them with opportunities where they can do things to assist those in need in our local community. The following shows some of the ways each of the schools have contributed to the plight of the homeless in Tweed and are living images of Jesus Christ in today's world.

St Joseph's Primary held Can Can Day on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May. Students felt that sometimes people feel that they can't do anything to help others, their aim was to promote that you CAN be a help by bringing in cans of food. Each class was asked to bring in as many cans of food as they could and cans from each class were lined up. The day was a huge success, with over 400 cans of food brought in and even the local paper coming down to write a story. The class with the longest line of cans was a year 6 class with a whopping total of 138 cans!!

St James Primary invited John Lee to come in and speak to students about the issues of poverty both locally and on a global scale to create awareness of the issues at hand. St James Primary also commit to a weekly food drive where students bring and collect food for YHAF.



This year St Joseph's College has set-up a YHAF group within the school. This group consists of over 30 Yr 10 students and is lead by Yr 11 students with the help of committed teachers within the school. The aim of the group is to promote awareness of local issues of poverty and assist in any way they can. Each term the group focuses on one issue. This term the focus was a Winter Appeal with the aim to collect food and warm winter clothing for YHAF. Students spoke as assembly, went to meetings, gave up lunch-time to promote this and went around each week to classes to collect food and clothes. The results were fantastic with numerous bags of winter clothing and blankets collected not to mention all the food, coffee, tea, hot chocolate and milk that was also brought in.

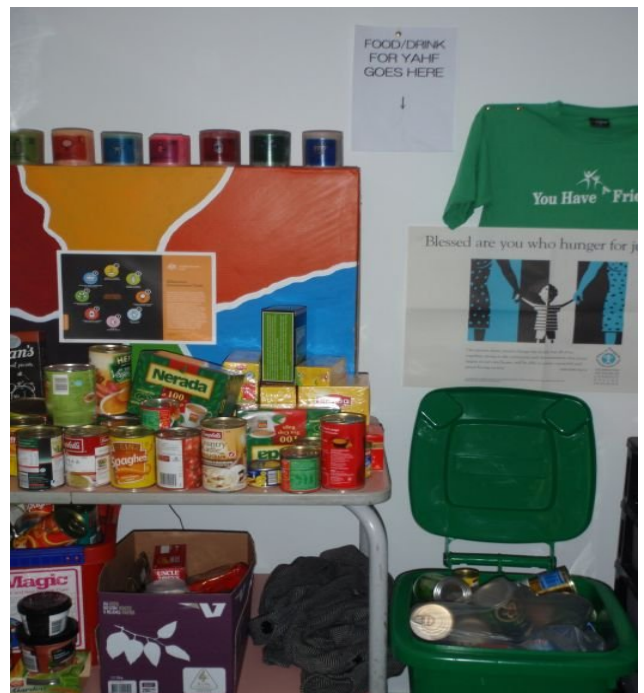


### **Our Tweed Schools Support the Homeless and Marginalised**

Today's youth I believe, are more caring, empathetic and have a better understanding of homelessness than previous generations. Many of the students I am in contact with have a great awareness and understanding that to be homeless does not mean one is drug or alcohol addicted. Rather, they understand, many of these unfortunate people are products of broken homes, with very little parental guidance and often the streets are a safer place than those supporting them as they grow and mature.

Each week, year 11 and 12 students and teachers from St. Joseph's College, Banora Point and Mount St Patrick College in Murwillumbah join us on the streets as we provide food and drink to the many homeless and marginalised in Coolangatta and Murwillumbah. The love and care the students and teachers show as they serve food and provide a cuppa and just chat to the patrons is special.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide meals, clothing and toiletries every day of the week to the friends we currently support in Coolangatta, Tweed Heads, Chinderah and Murwillumbah. A way around this predicament is to ensure we collect and distribute basic essential items such as tinned food and clothing. It is the support from local schools who make this possible by collecting tinned food and clothing which we distribute each week to those desperately in need. We wish to thank the many students from year one through to year 12 who through their love and care provide the means for us to continue the distribution of food, clothing, bedding, toiletries. The schools involved (in alpha sequence):



Sathya Sai Primary School - Murwillumbah, St. Anthony's Primary School - Kingscliff  
 St. James Primary – Banora Point, St. Joseph's College – Banora Point,  
 St. Joseph's Primary – Tweed Heads, Terranora Public School - Terranora

Besides the wonderful support from students, I also thank and acknowledge the dedicated principals, teachers and parents who work so closely with us in our efforts to ensure that the youth of today have a full appreciation of what it means to be homeless and not as well off as others. I have immense faith in the youth of the future that through their understanding and education they will treat and support our homeless friends with greater respect and dignity than current governments and ruling bodies do.

**John Lee PHF, President, You Have A Friend Inc.**

## Paul Harris Fellow' ~ By Robyn Lee

A couple of weeks ago I received a 'top secret' telephone call from Lyn Sullivan who is the President of the Rotary Club of Mt Warning AM Murwillumbah, who invited John and I to the 2011 Changeover Dinner, which was held on Tuesday 28 June.

John was under the impression he was attending a speaking engagement to promote the plight of the homeless and emphasise the need for a community centre. It was the Tuesday night outreach at Murwillumbah, and it was therefore necessary to emphasise to him that it was a formal occasion, else he would have rolled up straight from Murwillumbah in his 'outreach gear'. Although there was no telephone booth in which to perform his 'superman' stunt, any of the locals in Knox Park, and the donors who arrived mid stream to deliver toiletries, were certainly entertained as he changed from the appearance of a hard working vollyie covered in cream bun, to the smooth, suave, debonair, sweet smelling campaigner against homelessness. The transition was so phenomenal I almost didn't recognise him... WOW what a spunk!!!!



During the course of formalities, President Lyn Sullivan invited John to the podium, and, upon explaining to members and guests of John's never ending efforts to help those in need, bestowed upon him one of the highest honours given by the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International. He was named a 'Paul Harris Fellow' in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world.

John, I know the vollies will join me in saying CONGRATULATIONS, we are all so proud of you. You are a humble man, and although your work has never been about reward, this wonderful honour is so deserving, and will open many doors for you, and You Have A Friend.

Continue to follow your dreams, and remember that:-

*'although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it'. – Helen Keller (1880-1968).*

PS As we both attend the Saturday night outreach, I am declaring it a formal occasion (so see you in your suit!!) ~ **Rob**

### Reply by John

Yes, I was totally unaware of what had been planned for me and it was a wonderful surprise. I am humbled and honoured. It is such a special award and as so many wonderful people throughout the world have been honoured with it I will always strive to do the best I can in honour of my award.

I sincerely thank Lyn Sullivan, her committee and Rotary Club of Mt Warning AM Murwillumbah for nominating me for this most prestigious award. In addition, I thank the many wonderful volunteers who do such an amazing job supporting the charity and the many people we support through our charity. Not forgetting the magnificent support I get from my wonderful board members. And last but by no means least, a very big thank you to my wonderful wife who is always so supportive in so many ways. Without you all, I could not do what I do.

May God Bless and keep you and your families forever, ~ **John Lee PHF**



# Our Veggies and Their Contributions



## You Have A Friend is coming of age!

Since its inception three years ago our organisation has grown – possi-

bly beyond any vision that John ever had. I know from my part, I never imagined that I would become so involved (although after those first six to twelve months my mind started racing with ideas for development!).

Now we have a great team of support volunteers, some could be considered the unsung heroes. Here are some of the ‘behind the scenes’ tasks that these dedicated volunteers perform as regularly as clockwork –

- Restock the caddies and food boxes for Sunday breakfast
- Pack the boxes for Monday and Tuesday night outreaches
- Cook food for Tuesday night outreach at Murwillumbah
- Heat and prepare meals for Monday and Tuesday evening meals
- Wrap endless packs of cutlery in serviettes
- Cut three containers of onions every Saturday
- Collect and deliver donated foods from several fruit and vegie shops, butchers & bakeries.
- Involved in the Woolies Food Rescue Program – four (4) days a week
- Preparing the boxes of Chocolates to distribute to our sellers
- Arrive at the hall by 7am each Sunday to prepare and pack food, load the vans and ensure that all necessities for the smooth-running of the Sunday breakfasts are in the vans.
- Manage and distribute the clothes donations and pack boxes/baskets to take to the outreaches.
- Attend working bees for making toiletry packs for special events eg Easter, Christmas, Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day.

These are just some of the tasks that I see happening on a regular basis, and without them, our organisation would not survive.

There is always room for more of our volunteers to assist with some of the tasks I have listed especially in cooking a pot of food for the Murwillumbah Tuesday night outreach.

Please contact me at any time if you have any suggestions to improve and/or expand YHAF.

**Best wishes ~ Dorothy Elliott– Volunteer Coordinator**

## Captain John Lee and his Band

*The greatest veggies in the land,  
Are Captain John Lee and his band*

*There’s Dorothy our volunteer extraor-  
dinaire,  
But change her roster, don’t you dare.*

*There’s Dom you’ll find him with his  
tins,  
And sadly, after dark going through bins*

*There’s Reece, our greatest MP to be,  
And Chris, our Mr Consistency*

*There’s Alan and Robyn, with books to  
balance,  
And Don a man of many talents*

*There’s Dee, our wonder who goes far,  
And all the gang from MuBar*

*There’s Fiona and her kids, who do so  
much, And Davina, we haven’t seen ya,  
don’t lose touch*

*There’s Thor, and Leon, Betty and Milt,  
Our Sunday cooks, on which we’re built*

*And who’d forget our Monday chefs,  
Making feasts out of Sunday lefts  
Yvonne, Sandra, Elisabeth and Kath-  
leen,  
Cooking snags, onions and something  
green*

*There’s Karen S and Karen C,  
Mel, Michelle, Dawn and my Bernie*

*There’s Jodie snapping, Gary rapping  
And Charlies selling solar energy*

*But if you failed to get a mention,  
Smile, salute and stand to attention*

*You’re part of John Lee’s great army  
Fighting homelessness and poverty*

**By Dom Bennett**

## A Thursday in the Life of the Murwillumbah BBQ Lunch Team

We are at moment a little short- staffed as Norm and Mary have been gallivanting over the countryside for nigh on 4 months.

Little Margaret has been there organising wins at "Dee's housie" -scooping the pool so to speak. Dale has had a few wins also as has Norman. I think the 3 of them won't tell anyone of the bingo because they are more assured of winning with fewer numbers of players!!! Our generous donors continue to support our BBQs without hesitation.

Back to Margaret- she takes control of the clean -up getting "will you be there" Dave to assist putting the tables and chairs away. Marg meticulously cleans the tables, picks up the dirty plates and cutlery and delivers same to the kitchen for washing up.

Bernadette has joined the team, as has Paul, Alan and John. Barbara continues to supply a feast of goodies such as muffins, sponge cakes, slices and soups to the joy of the patrons. John Stevens from England will be returning in September for 4 weeks and is demanding to get back to helping out at the BBQ.

Wendy, Ziggy and the community centre team are always willing to assist us in preparation and supplying essential items

**Thank you "The Murwillumbah Team"**



## Goodbye to Three Friends

It is with much sadness that I report since our last Newsletter, three of our friends have died on the streets. Two recently died in Tweed Heads and over Easter, we also lost a special friend in Murwillumbah.



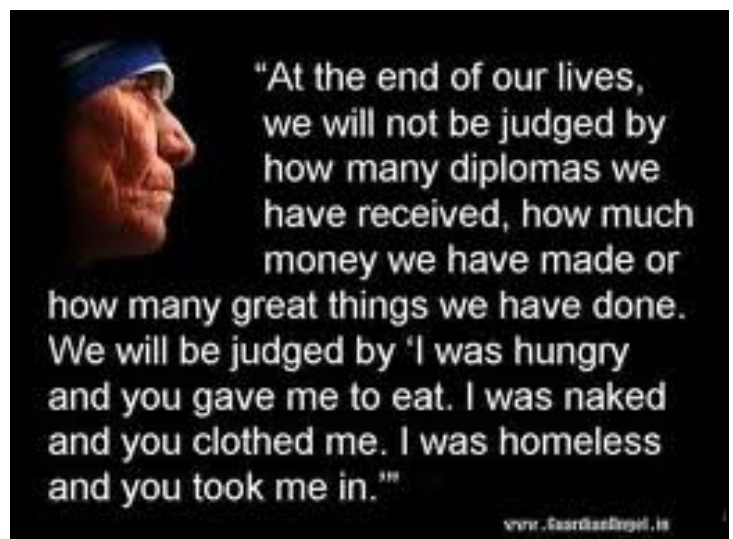
It is not easy to lose our friends, especially when one realises the loneliness some of these people experience each day of their lives. Many may not have spoken or been in contact with relatives or friends for considerable time and then their life ends on a lonely street all alone.

I am convinced if we had a "drop-in centre" in Tweed Heads, many of the deaths would not have taken place as we would know their situation and state of mind. Furthermore I am of the opinion it is the responsibility of the government (local, state and federal) to provide support to our homeless persons in the Tweed and I refer to the Australian Human Rights Commission Website which states;

***"A human rights response to homelessness would involve all levels of government committing to and taking concrete and targeted legislative, policy and budgetary steps towards the full and immediate realisation of the human rights of homeless persons."***

([http://www.hreoc.gov.au/human\\_rights/housing/homelessness\\_2008.html#7](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/human_rights/housing/homelessness_2008.html#7))

**On behalf of all involved with You Have A Friend, Rest In Peace Uncle Barry, Paulie and Russel.**





## FOR THE RECORD!

The fastest journey on foot across Australia was completed by Donnie Maclurcan who ran across the Australian continental mainland from Cottesloe Beach, Perth, Western Australia, to Bondi Beach, Sydney, NSW in 67 days, 2 hours and 57 mins from 5 January to 13 March 2002.

The longest distance keeping a table lifted with the teeth is 11.80 m (38 ft 8 in) and was achieved by Georges Christen (Luxembourg) who ran this distance holding a 12 kg (26 lb 7 oz) heavy table with a person weighing 50 kg (110 lb 3 oz) sitting on it, on the set of 'Lo show dei record', in Madrid, Spain, on 9 February 2008.

The largest surfboard, made by Nev Hyman (Australia), was 12 m (39 ft 4 in) long, 3 m (9 ft 10 in) wide and 30 cm (11.8 in) thick and was launched at Snapper Rocks, Queensland, Australia on 5 March 2005.

The world's largest living turtle, the leatherback sea turtle also holds the record for the longest migration of any reptile. Between 2006 and early 2008, a tagged leatherback was tracked by satellite as it made a 20,558 km (12,774 mi) journey from its nesting site on the beaches of Papua, Indonesia, to feeding grounds off the coast of the U.S. state of Oregon. The journey, to the other side of the planet, took the intrepid turtle 647 days to complete.

The largest hot dog eating contest was achieved by 3,189 participants during an event organised by Oscar Mayer (Spain) in Puente de las Flores, Valencia, Spain, on 12 March 2011.



## Computer Tech Support

**This ought to make you feel better about your computer skills!**

=====

**Tech support:** What kind of computer do you have?

**Female customer:** A white one...

=====

**Tech support:** Click on the 'my computer' icon on to the left of the screen.

**Customer:** Your left or my left?

=====

**Tech support:** Good day. How may I help you?

**Male customer:** Hello... I can't print.

**Tech support:** Would you click on "start" for me and...

**Customer:** Listen pal; don't start getting technical on me! I'm not Bill Gates.

=====

**Tech support:** What's on your monitor now, ma'am?

**Customer:** A teddy bear my boyfriend bought for me at the 7-11.

=====

**Customer:** My keyboard is not working anymore.

**Tech support:** Are you sure it's plugged into the computer?

**Customer:** No. I can't get behind the computer.

**Tech support:** Pick up your keyboard and walk 10 paces back.

**Customer:!** OK

**Tech support:** Did the keyboard come with you?

**Customer:** Yes

**Tech support:** That means the keyboard is not plugged in. Is there another keyboard?

**Customer:** Yes, there's another one here. Ah..that one does work...

=====

**Customer:** can't get on the Internet.

**Tech support:** Are you sure you used the right password?

**Customer:** Yes, I'm sure. I saw my colleague do it.

**Tech support:** Can you tell me what the password was?

**Customer:** Five stars.

And last but not least...

**Tech support:** "Okay Bob, let's press the control and escape keys at the same time.

That brings up a task list in the middle of the screen. Now type the letter "P" to bring up the Program Manager."

**Customer:** I don't have a P.

**Tech support:** On your keyboard, Bob.

**Customer:** What do you mean?

**Tech support:** "P".....on your keyboard, Bob.

**Customer:** I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT

## SOUTH AMERICAN EXPERIENCES

During March/April this year, my husband and I had a wonderful holiday in South America. During the month we were away, we travelled in Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Bolivia and Chile. We had 13 different flights, numerous bus, boat and train journeys and stayed in 18 different hotels. We came home to have a rest!

South America generally in recent years has experienced great economic growth, and thanks to the improvement in the economy, action has been taken by the various governments to reduce poverty, to improve the quality of life of the people, provide more housing and fund education. The extent of poverty varied in each country. As a tourist travelling with a small group, the focus was on the positive aspects of each place we visited – on the scenery, monuments and, especially in Peru, on the archaeological sites. Nevertheless, the obvious poverty in some areas could not be avoided.

In Buenos Aires, a beautiful and prosperous-looking city, there were homeless people on the streets, finding shelter wherever they could. Many impoverished people from other areas in Argentina and from countries to the north are drawn to Buenos Aires in the hope of finding work. The need for accommodation has created shanty towns on the outskirts of the city. These small houses are made of whatever materials can be found, there is usually water available and often electricity is taken illegally from the main grid. There is no sanitation system. Our guide in Buenos Aires was reluctant to answer our questions about these areas, content to blame them on insufficient or misdirected action by the government. One of the government's relief programs targets families, with subsidies greatly rising with the seventh child. Unfortunately this has encouraged large families amongst those who can afford them least.

In Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro, we stayed in Copacabana, walked along the famous beach to Ipanema and visited Corcovado which is crowned by the wonderful 30 metre high statue of Christ the Redeemer. In Rio the areas closest to the beautiful beaches are home to luxurious apartments and the mansions of the wealthy. Steep mountains form a backdrop to the city and it is in these areas that the poor of Rio live, their shanties clinging rather precariously to the hill sides. These areas are called favelas and house the extremely poor. There is a high crime rate and drug use in these areas. Yet there has developed a romantic view of the favelas and in tourist markets and craft shops we saw many



paintings of colourful and picturesque favelas, often used as the background to paintings of their famous samba dancers. These images, at such odds with the reality, made us feel uncomfortable.

We again experienced what could be called the marketing of poverty when we were in Peru in the Amazon jungle. After experiencing a wonderful three days in the jungle we returned to the city of Iquitos for our flight to Lima. Our boat took us past a floating village. The small houses, built of reeds, straw, wood and tin, had been built on wooden rafts at the water's edge. Walkways led out into the river and at the end was the toilet which emptied directly into the water. We were very uncomfortable with this sort of poverty tourism, especially as we had no way to directly help these people.

When we travelled to Bolivia, we first stayed in the largest city, La Paz. It is a noisy, crowded and bustling city with chaotic traffic and the many native Indians in their traditional dress and bowler hats created bright splashes of colour. We were there on Palm Sunday, Bolivia is a devoutly Catholic country and the Cathedral was packed. Many native women were selling a variety of handmade palm crosses outside the church.

Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in South America. This was most obvious in the country areas where most of the dwellings, in both the towns and the countryside, were of adobe bricks. In the country the people existed on subsistence farming and few houses had electricity or running water, although these services are gradually being extended. Tourism contributes greatly to the economy in these areas and the poverty rate is expected to decline throughout the country.

Our overall impressions of South America are not, however, of a country of extensive poverty. Each of the countries we visited is working consistently to alleviate the plight of the extremely poor and gains in health and education are ongoing. Our impressions were of beautiful landscapes, fascinating archaeological areas, great shopping and wonderful food – our 495 photos attest to this! Wherever we went we were welcomed with cheerfulness and courtesy. With the developments in their economies I believe that South American countries will continue to raise the standard of living for those most in need and, in the future, this can only add to the great experiences of travellers. Thinking of an overseas holiday? Put South America at the top of your list! By ~ *Lorraine Sterry*

## Collection Tins

We have been trying over the last few months to increase the number of our collection tins in the community.

The reason for this is:

- obviously to increase our weekly income, through these tins, to help cover the day to day cost of the charity, ie. food for outreaches, van running costs etc.

to increase our presence in the Southern Gold Coast community and make people more aware of who we are, and what we are doing.

The aim is to have tins placed in various retail outlets. I have had a fantastic response so far from various vollies, willing to place and look after some tins for us. The idea is to have a

number of volunteers servicing a number of tins each, week or fortnight. Hopefully through this, we will substitute our running costs and also assist with leasing payments on the community centre when the need arises.

I would like to thank Chris and Reece, who are already managing a number of tins each, also Jodie, Mark, Charles, Davina, John and hopefully Maureen and Alan, who are raring to go, awaiting the new batch of tins.

I ask any other volunteers, if you would like to help with these tins, please let me know.

You may have a local shop, cafe, pub or petrol station you go to, or you may know of someone who will take a tin for us. Any placement of any tins would be fantastic. You may be surprised at the positive response you get. I have found there are some tremendously caring and generous people out there.

*Happy Hunting ~ Dom*



**Thank you for your support!**  
**St Joseph's Parish** Thomson & Frances St,  
Tweed Heads 0755367522  
**St Joseph's College** 07 55249002  
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# Refugees and War

**Is There a Solution to Terrorism – I say there is.**

**Article by John Lee**

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared 'All refugees and internally displaced people have the right to receive assistance; the right to protection from abuse and the freedom to seek asylum'. On 18 March 2011, there were 5271 men, 618 women and 1030 children detained in seven Immigration Detention Centres around Australia while a recent poll indicated almost 70% of Australians believe the "boat people" should be returned to their homelands. Yet few question; "Why are these people fleeing their country"?

What has caused these people to flee their homelands, abandoned their families and friends, travel thousands of dangerous kilometers overland and then through treacherous seas in leaky boats to come to Australia? Australia they believe will offer them an existence free of religious persecution, where their children can be educated and they will live a safe life. And then on being refused entry, why are so many prepared to take their own life and self harm rather than return to their country? Surely there are serious issues few in the media, government or general population care to ask.

For the six months prior to April 2011, there have been five suicides in the Detention Centres. In December 2010, Immigration Minister Chris Bowen reported ten detainees in Christmas Island Detention Centre had sown their lips closed in protest at their slow processing. A study undertaken by the Social Policy Research Centre in December 2010 established there were 79 incidents of self-harm between July and December 2010.

The Australian Department of Immigration and Detention as of 11 March 2011 noted, of the 6819 illegal immigrants held in Australian Immigration Detention Centres, 74% were from war torn Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. The greatest numbers of illegal immigrants, 33% are from war ravaged Afghanistan. If as Australia's Prime Minister Julia Gillard states, Australian troops are on a humanitarian mission to provide peace and stability to Afghanistan and surrounds, and that we are winning the war, why then are Afghanis topping the list of refugees? The majority of asylum-seekers in our Immigration Detention Centres are fleeing a war

fought by Australian and First world troops. Of the 150 or more major conflicts since World War II, 130 of these were in poor countries.

Since 9/11 the US government has outlaid \$1.121 trillion dollars on the war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Patrick Walters reporting for The Australian noted Australia was set to spend a massive \$1.2 billion in 2009-10 on defence and a further \$62 million for our military involvement in Iraq. Many of the asylum-seekers filling our Immigration Detention Centres are fleeing not only war but abject poverty in their country.

In 2005 The World Bank reported almost half of the world's population or 3.14 billion people survive on less than \$2.50 a day. Just 1% of the world's military budget will provide schooling for every primary school child in the world – but it did not happen. In 2005 it was estimated over 72 million children of primary school age are not in school.

In 2010, Pakistan was devastated by some of the worst floods in history directly affecting 72 million people who desperately needed basic necessities such as food, water and shelter. Bridges, roads, villages and infrastructure need rebuilding and nearly 1.7 million homes are destroyed. The US donation of \$200 million is a fraction of what the US spends on weapons of mass destruction. For example, just three tests of missile defence systems cost US\$275 million. Trillions of dollars are spent on an Afghanistan war that appears a hopeless cause against a "redoubtable Taliban" enemy while the World Bank estimates the paltry sum of \$40 to \$60 billion dollars a year would halve world poverty.

In 2000 in a gesture of solidarity, 191 countries signed the Millennium Development Goals to halve global poverty by 2015. Each of the signatories agreed to donate just 0.7% of their GDP, or just seventy cents per \$100.00 a country makes is sufficient to halve global poverty. Yet this is not happening and 11 years on just 5 countries have fulfilled their commitment. Australia still lags far below their 0.7% pledge.

Our Immigration Detention Centres are sad detention centres filled with thousands of men, women and children who have arrived on our shores fleeing wars we are fighting in their country. To ignore these people's cry for help, and most of all, to not ask **"why?"** these simple folk have abandoned their homes and family, is an injustice our capitalistic, consumerism society must be held accountable for.



Is terrorism perhaps therefore a cry of protest by the vast majority of the world's population? A protest against gross disparity between the rich and the poor in a world where 80% of the population live on less than \$10 a day and the gap between rich and poor nations is growing alarmingly? There are, I argue logical and inexpensive solutions. If just a fraction of the military budget spent by the First World nations was used to build dams, schools, hospitals and agricultural support, would the poor and displaced roam the globe seeking refuge and a safe life for their families in strange lands. Above all, we would live in a world of peace.

### **War and Poverty - Go Hand in Hand**

Wars and conflict are major causes of poverty and suffering. They kill and injure thousands and leave many orphaned and homeless. They destabilise economies, traumatised communities and make the poorest people even poorer. Conflict is also more likely to happen in poor countries, partly because people are desperate for land, rights, water or even food.

Conflict tears apart the very fabric of a society, destroying homes, roads, health systems, schools and leaves behind landmines and trauma. People may be forced to flee their homes, abandoning all their possessions. These people become refugees or displaced people within their own country. Often they will end up in refugee camps where disease and illness spread quickly in overcrowded conditions. In fact, usually more people die from malnutrition or disease as a result of a war, than directly from the fighting.

In modern conflicts, 90 percent of victims are innocent civilians, not soldiers. Women and children are particularly vulnerable. Children are especially affected by conflict. Ongoing wars can disrupt their education for years at a time, so as adults they are less likely to get a well-paid job and are more likely to become poor. Also, children may be orphaned by war or become separated from their families while fleeing a conflict. Many become vulnerable to exploitation, including sexual abuse.

Hundreds of billions of dollars are spent by governments every year on military forces. Yet far less is spent on proactive peace building and community development. The sums involved are so huge that even a modest reduction in global military spending could be redirected to significantly reduce worldwide poverty.

### **Comparison of tools for Life and War**

- US\$275 million will stock 204,500 clinics around the world for a year.
- ***This is what it costs for three tests of missile defence system.***
- US\$350 million will build wells to provide water in Africa for 65 million people.
- ***This is what it costs to build just six Trident II missiles***



- US\$2.1 billion will immunise over 134 million children worldwide against deadly diseases such as measles, typhoid and tuberculosis
- ***This is what it costs to build one stealth bomber.***
- In 2006-7, the Australian Federal Government budgeted to spend \$220 billion.
- ***This included \$39 billion on health, \$17 billion on defence, \$16 billion on education and \$3 billion on foreign aid.***

(Extract from World Vision website - [www.worldvision.com.au](http://www.worldvision.com.au))

# Global Poverty Including Child Poverty

## Global Poverty ~ Some Disturbing Facts

**The poorest 40 percent of the world's population accounts for 5 percent of global income. The richest 20 percent accounts for three-quarters of world income. Source 3**

Almost half the world — over three billion people — live on less than \$2.50 a day.

**According to UNICEF, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty. And they “die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death.”**

Around 27-28 percent of all children in developing countries are estimated to be underweight or stunted. The two regions that account for the bulk of the deficit are South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

**Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names.**

Less than one per cent of what the world spent every year on weapons was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000 and yet it didn't happen.

Infectious diseases continue to blight the lives of the poor across the world. An estimated 40 million people are living with HIV/AIDS, with 3 million deaths in 2004. Every year there are 350–500 million cases of malaria, with 1 million fatalities: Africa accounts for 90 percent of malarial deaths and African children account for over 80 percent of malaria victims worldwide.

**In 2005, the wealthiest 20% of the world accounted for 76.6% of total private consumption. The poorest fifth just 1.5**

1.6 billion people — a quarter of humanity — live without electricity:

**The total wealth of the top 8.3 million people around the world “rose 8.2 percent to \$30.8 trillion in 2004, giving them control of nearly a quarter of the world's financial assets.” In other words, about 0.13% of the world's population controlled 25% of the world's financial assets in 2004.**

For every \$1 in aid a developing country receives, over \$25 is spent on debt repayment.

**51 percent of the world's 100 hundred wealthiest bodies are corporations.**

The wealthiest nation on Earth has the widest gap between rich and poor of any industrialized nation.

**The poorer the country, the more likely it is that debt repayments are being extracted directly from people who neither contracted the loans nor received any of the money.**

In 1960, the 20% of the world's people in the richest countries had 30 times the income of the poorest 20% — in 1997, 74 times as much.

**A mere 12 percent of the world's population uses 85 percent of its water, and these 12 percent do not live in the Third World.**



*Consider the global priorities in spending in 1998 in \$U.S. Billions*  
*Cosmetics in the United States US\$ 8 billion, Ice cream in Europe US\$ 11 billion*  
*Perfumes in Europe and the United States US\$ 12 billion*  
*Pet foods in Europe and the United States US\$ 17 billion*  
*Business entertainment in Japan US\$ 35 billion*  
*Cigarettes in Europe US\$ 50 billion, Alcoholic drinks in Europe US\$ 105 billion*  
*Narcotics drugs in the world US\$ 400 billion, Military spending in the world US\$ 780 billion*

*And compare that to what was estimated as additional costs to achieve universal access to basic social services in **all developing countries**:*

*Basic education for all US\$ 6 billion, Water and sanitation for all US\$ 9 billion*  
*Reproductive health for all women US\$ 12 billion*



**Facts on Global Child Poverty**  
**Source: State of the World's Children, 2010 , UNICEF**

**Child Population :**

Number of children in the world - 2.2 billion

Number of children in poverty - 1 billion (every second child)

**Shelter, safe water and health**

For the 1.9 billion children from the developing world, there are:

640 million without adequate shelter (1 in 3)

400 million with no access to safe water (1 in 5)

270 million with no access to health services (1 in 7)



**Children out of education worldwide** ~ 121 million

**Survival for children Worldwide,**

Over 22,000 children die every day around the world. That is one child every 4 seconds.

10.6 million died in 2003 before they reached the age of 5 (same as children population in France, Germany, Greece and Italy)

1.4 million die each year from lack of access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation

**Health of children Worldwide,**

2.2 million children die each year because they are not immunized

15 million children orphaned due to HIV/AIDS (similar to the total children population in Germany or United Kingdom)

Some more numbers on the state of the world's children

**From UNICEF, the world's premier children's organization, part of the United Nations:**

2.5 billion people lack access to improved sanitation

1 billion children are deprived of one or more services essential to survival and development

148 million under 5s in developing regions are underweight for their age

101 million children are not attending primary school, with more girls than boys missing out

22 million infants are not protected from diseases by routine immunization

8 million children worldwide died before their 5th birthday in 2009

4 million newborns worldwide are dying in the first month of life

2 million children under 15 are living with HIV

500,000 women die each year from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth

***Source: State of the World's Children, 2010 , UNICEF***



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