



THE NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2024

improving lives • creating sustainable solutions • making a difference

Lewa Volunteer Trip - Eldoret Kenya 21 - 29 April 2024



Our Volunteers Arrive in Eldoret!

The GTO's trip to Lewa Children's Home clearly struck a chord and drew an overwhelming response from WSP. Phyllis Keino's dedication to caring for orphaned children, spanning back to the 1960s, is nothing short of remarkable. What began as an individual's compassionate endeavour has since blossomed into a multifaceted project comprising a farm, primary school and children's home.

Integrating Farming for Sustenance and Education at Lewa Children's Home

The integration of a farm into the project is particularly noteworthy, as it not only provides sustenance but also serves as an educational and vocational resource for the children. The farm's production of vegetables, fresh milk and top-quality Gouda cheese is proof of the project's commitment to self-sufficiency.

The efforts of the fourteen volunteers, led by Sue Longo and Jon Howcroft, is truly commendable. Big thanks to Bryan Wilson, Christa Bedwin, Devina Chinniah, Emily Martin, Jennifer Noble, Sean Lee, Jill Neumann, Lisa Kamikazi, Moustafa Abdel Halim, Nardos Abebe, Natalie Jones, Nazila Bagheri, Riley Hansen and Tarek Badawy displayed incredible generosity by offering their time and skills to make a positive impact.



How to Donate
www.givengain.com

Shade Cloth Structure

Constructing a 40x90 meter shade cloth structure for the vegetable garden and painting murals in the school library and the new school wing are contributions that will pay dividends for years to come. It was especially gratifying that the children actively participated in the painting and construction process and enjoyed bonding with the volunteers during their school holidays.

Read more about what they do:
<https://lewachildrenshome.org/>



Joyful Connections: Engaging in Fun Activities

The volunteers' dedication to spending their afternoons engaging with the children through homework assistance, games, sports and movie nights proved invaluable. Happiness can be found in simple moments and interactions which underscores the profound impact of volunteer initiatives.



The rapid engagement and warm welcome from the children at Lewa Children's Home highlights the nurturing environment fostered by the staff and volunteers alike. It is clear that the volunteers' presence not only brought joy to the children but also left a lasting impression on the volunteers.

Michael Waweru Wambi who works as the social worker at Lewa Children's Home, coordinated and organised the activities for the children and volunteers.



We asked Mike about how he came to join the team at Lewa and the impact Lewa has had on the children.

“When I joined the team in October 2022, my first impression was that many of the children lacked healthy relationships with responsibility, and their self-perception was marred by past traumas. It was clear that they needed more than just shelter; they needed hope, guidance and support.

Determined to make a difference, I embarked on a mission to redefine their narratives. We started by creating personalised care plans for each child, considering their unique needs, passions and challenges. But it was not just about academics; it was about fostering a sense of purpose and self-worth.

Since then, I have witnessed incredible transformations. The children now seek out responsibilities, eager to contribute to the community. Their academic pursuits have become a source of pride, and they are hungry for knowledge and opportunities. But most importantly, they have begun to see themselves in a new light—with hope, resilience and boundless potential.

My vision for Lewa Children's Home extends far beyond its walls. I believe in providing comprehensive support that empowers every child to thrive. From improving communication skills to offering diverse pathways to success, my goal is to create a nurturing environment where dreams can flourish.

But my work does not end there. I have also been coordinating the Little Lions Child Coaching Program at Kipkeino School, a 12-week initiative aimed at providing mental health support to children in need. The impact of this program has been profound, and I am committed to finding ways to expand its reach and impact.

Through my efforts, I hope to inspire not just support, but belief—in the potential of every child to defy odds and carve out their own path to success. Lewa Children's Home is not just a place of refuge; it is a beacon of hope, and I am honoured to play a part in its story.”

Farewell To All Our New Friends



Thank you to our wonderful team of volunteers for their hard work and many laughs along the way. They have made a huge difference to the little lives at Lewa Children's Home!



Go on the **links** below to hear the testimonials from our volunteers:

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1176210526882127> - Tarek Badawy

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1887491411713546> - Lisa Kamikazi

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1467459100649290> - Devina Chinniah

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/403727029219629> - Jil Neumann

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/458182593314497> - Nardos Abebe

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1844670816006459> - Riley Hansen

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/423846330246619> - Emily Martin

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1467839983808352> - Bryan Wilson

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/442761294910690> - Natalie Jones

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/358573966638331> - Sean Lee

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1467459100649290> - Devina Chinniah

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/800667208639651> - Nazila Bagheri

<https://web.facebook.com/GTOTrust/videos/360360973693402/> - Jennifer Noble

<https://web.facebook.com/GTOTrust/videos/1137626250916040/> - Moustafa Abdel Halim

If you are interested in volunteering with GTO, please apply by email info@gtotrust.co.za or speak to your Regional Trustee. We have begun planning for our next trip so stay tuned for more information!

WSP and Workforce

Every year Dan Cacciotti, from the WSP Sudbury office, organises a hockey tournament on behalf of the Ontario Society for Professional Engineers (OSPE) for the Sudbury region. Teams come from all over Ontario, Canada including Sudbury, North Bay, Ottawa, Sault Ste. Marie and Toronto and each team is typically affiliated with an engineering firm or company. WSP (formerly Golder and Wood) have had a team in the tourney for 25 years. Funds raised during the tournament are donated to various charities and this year Dan and the organising committee donated to GTO. The WSP team is pictured here and while they didn't win the tournament they certainly won the hearts of all the children that will benefit from the \$1000 CAD donation. Thanks Dan and OSPE!



A Big Thank You To Michele Sims (Senior Project Coordinator) - Walnut Creek - Office Closing (US)

Michele Sims, a longtime office champion and supporter of GTO is happy to report that they raised almost \$400 USD for the GTO and donated a number of computer accessories to a charity in Oakland (thank you Robert Roat) as well as keyboards and mice for GTO.

On top of that Michele raised a further \$100 for the GTO through the remaining Walnut Creek Snack Shack funds she has been managing at the office.

Thank you for making a big difference to little lives.