

ACP is a non-profit organization incorporated in the state of Illinois. ACP relies on donors to fulfill its mission of supporting the Awassa Vocational Training and Circus Center and is committed to financial transparency.

The \$\$\$\$\$. Where its fr om. Where it go es.

Establishment of Bank Account: August, 2001
Final Incorporation as non-profit: December, 2002

Income 8/01-5/03

Benefits:	\$ 7,142
Corporate Contributions:	\$ 11,000
Individual Contributions:	\$ 20,645
Earned Income:	\$ 1,450
Total Income	\$ 40,237

Expenses 8/01-5/03

Benefit Expense:	\$ 1,853
Business Expense:	
Incorporation	\$ 850
Meetings (food)	\$ 575
Office/phone/copies	\$ 940
	\$ 2,365
Program Supplies:	\$ 645
Publicity/Fund-raising/Documentation:	\$ 2,370
Travel (3 trips,4 fares):	\$ 5,400
Transfers to Ethiopia:	\$ 26,475
Total Expenses:	\$ 39,108



YOU CAN HELP!

1. **Volunteer and join our Board of Directors:** work on our fund-raisers, help us write grants, produce our newsletter, create our book, send supplies to Ethiopia, coordinate our penpal program.

2. More of the above. We meet monthly and work hard.

If interested, email us at awassa@awassachildrenproject.org or call us at 708-445-2614.

And PLEASE, contribute, checks to:

Awassa Children's Project
930 S. Grove Ave.
Oak Park, IL 60304
708-445-2614
awassa@awassachildrenproject.org

The Debu Nigat Vocational Training & Circus Center is a grass-roots organization. The support of our contributors is what keeps the AIDS EDUCATION CIRCUS performing and touring, and the children of the CIRCUS fed and educated. Thank you for your contributions ranging from \$10 to \$6,000 in the last year:

Beverly Abbott, Kim Abrams, Addis Ababba Restaurant, Abyssinia Market, Neatha Aikonedo, Miriam Alper, Angela Allyn/Matt Dinerstein, Carmel Avegnon Sanders, AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, Deloris and Ephriam Axelrod, Randy Baygood, Sandra Berrigan, Doris Blessos, Paula Block, Blue Man Group, Roberta and Philip Bole, Ellen Bonham, Louise Bourgault, Ann Boyd, Paul Boyd and Katherine Dunn, Brodsky and Marder-Eppstein Families, John and Luz Bucarro, Ron and Debbie Buzil, Terrie Sue Cardella, Robert Calvin, Carribana Bar and Grill, Paul Chadha, Ellen Sebastian Chang, Melanie Cleveland, Aaron and Anne Cohen, Naima and Steve Cohn, Jessica Cherry, Chicago Waldorf School, Custom Hair Creations, Christine and Douglas Culbert, Carlos Cumpián and Cynthia Gallaher, Denis Chernyshaw and Kelly McDonough, Melanie Cleveland, Demelash Dejene, Helen Doria, Ray and Jan Edelstein, D. R. Edwards, Lois Elia, Goche Endris, Candace English, Ethiopian Diamond Restaurant, Ethio Mini-Mart and Abera Café, Linda Englund, Kate Ezra and Daniel Headrick, Zelalem Feleke, Gallagher-Kalensky Family, Zalalem Feleke ,Dr. Tessa Fischer, Lauren and Jim Foster, Terri Glover, Whoopi Goldberg, Fitta Geletu Gregg and Unruh Goodsmith, Ronald and Audrey Grzywinski, Shirley Brice Heath, Geoff and Janet Hewitt, Jessica Holt, Hope Hornstein, Richard Howard, Shari James, Eunice Joffe, Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation of Evanston, Robert Kane & Laura Donkel, Judith Kimrey, Monika and Alan Kimrey, Wendy Kinal, Judith Kinch, Sue and Mike Klonsky, Becky and Mathew Kohl, Ken Korda, Dr. Jack Kowlaski, Krishna LeFan, Glenn Leopold, Donald and Ruth Levine, Sydney and Adrienne Lieberman, Kristin Lister, Freddie Long, Vicki Magee, Wendy Mages, William and Evonee Malutich, Mama Desta's Red Sea Restaurant, Reggie Marder, Yosef Maru, Jim Mayshark, Myriam Mayshark, Daniel and Lisa McCarthy, Laurence and Elena McCarthy, Margaret McClay, Vicki McGee, Dereje Mekonnen, Joan Mendelson, Tesfaye Mengistu, Sheila Meyer, Haile Mezghebe, Abner Mikva, Paul and Renee Miller, Steven and Elizabeth Moore, William and Evonne Mulutich, H. Harvette Nelson, New Sheba Café and Restaurant, Jim Nisbet, Kelly Jo O'Connell, Laurie Oman, James Pekar and Maren Laughlin, Pleasant Travel, Q3 Art, Tesfaye Reta, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Ras Dashen Restaurant, Lois Cowen Roewade, Rhythm and Soul Productions, Charlie Rizzo, Dudley Rood, Carol Rosofsky and Bud Lifton, Carmel Avegnon Sanders, Deanna Sawyer, Hon. Jan Schakowsky, Maxine Schein, Schein Family, Lynn Schuette, Gebru Sebhatu, Brian and Stephanie Shaw, Dr. Renslow Sherer, Cheryl Sloane, Maurice Stein, Mary Spaulding, Sara and Andrew Susanin, Kelebe Takele, Woinshet Takele, Nuna Teal, Althea Teamer, Asratie Teferra, Mary and Mark Teresi, Kristine Thatcher, Gloria Thompson, Russ Vandenbroucke & Mary Dilg, Jennifer Viets, Laurie Viets, Verner Family, Elaine Waxman, Tanya White, Deborah Wolen, Tina Marie Wright, Belaynesh Yimer, Erku Yimer, Emmanuel Yitagesu, David and Susan Zesmer

Awassa Children's Project Newsletter

Fall 2003



Vol. 2 Issue 2

CHAT Chat - AWASSA YOUTH MAKE ART ATTACK ON GROWING HEALTH PROBLEM

By Tesfaye Tekelv

Editor's note: This year the participants of the AIDS Education Circus has expanded the use of theater as a public health education and outreach tool through a new show focused on the widespread use of the herbal stimulant Chat which is fast becoming one of Ethiopia's most serious health problems.* The initiative for this show came from the Circus members themselves and was written and produced by them.

Tesfaye Tekelv, 21, who is a recent graduate of the program and is employed now as the Vocational Center's accountant, sent us a description of the performances:

"We have performed the chat show in the Southern Regions in innumerable towns. We begin by driving into the market, stadium, schools and the center of town announcing by loudspeaker that there will be a show about chat, a circus, gymnastics and cultural dancing. When we come to our performance spot in the road, we form a circle, and begin with the gymnastics, circus and dancing in order to attract our audience. Within 15 minutes, a sizeable crowd has collected around us, clapping their hands. Finally, the chat show begins.

The main characters are two chat chewers who are discussing how they can get their hands on more money for chat. They decide to break into someone's house to steal the TV., stereo and other things. Having followed through on their plan, they exchange the goods for chat, which they promptly chew. Getting high, they consume it all.

One chewer says, 'I will go to America tomorrow, even though it is far! I will do it!'

The other says, 'I will build a house in two days, and the day after tomorrow I will buy a car!'

A third chewer says, 'Tomorrow, my boyfriend will buy me a ring!'

Our narrator then enters, saying, 'Chat is a very dangerous thing. Do not eat this. It is unnecessary for people to chew it, etc.'

Then, all the chewers agree with the narrator and talk with the audience about the dangerous chat.

The response to the work has been varied, of course. Many people accept our chat performances and feel a lot of anger toward the chat chewers. Other people say, 'There is nothing like chat for us. It is our heartbeat. You know, when we chew it, we get high. We are rich. We can control the world -- it is in our hands, and we have millions. So don't question the chat chewing; it is our best friend in this world.'



Tesfaye Tekelv

And different people who accept the show give us advice and tell us to continue the show over all of Ethiopia. They hope we can change young people's behavior and stop the chat consumption. The people say that it will be very good to know about the dangers of chat and how not to waste our lives. They also say to us, 'Please, we need you very much.'

Also, the government has been helpful. The towns we plan to visit welcome us because there is little accessibility to such programs.

After the performances, we feel we can see the fruit of our efforts."

In addition, Mekedes Megene and Antena Tamerat, both 16 years old, tell us,

"In the rural areas, we can educate many people to change their behavior, but in the city, many people like the show but seem less eager to change.

We educate the people about how chat is dangerous and damages the economy, as those who chew chat don't work, and they act strangely. When we perform, many people ask questions. Many are very happy about the show and give suggestions, while some do even pledge to change their habits."

* "The cultivation and consumption of the stimulant leaf khat (*Catha edulis* Forsk) is widespread in several countries of East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Khat has other names and spellings: qat, kat, chat, quat, catha, tschat, miraa, African salad, African tea, Abyssinian tea, kuses-salahin, and tohai. The leave comes from a small evergreen shrub that can grow to tree size... Young buds and tender leaves are chewed to attain a state of euphoria and stimulation... According to P. Kalix of the University of Geneva (1991, 1992), khat leaves contain cathinone, an active brain stimulant that is similar in structure and pharmacological activity to amphetamine."

Abraham Dalu, Associate Toxicology Specialist, Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Dow Corning Corporation.
<http://www.sidamaconcern.com/articles/abraham.htm>

INTERVIEWS AND HISTORIES OF CENTER'S NEWEST KIDS

Jibriel Legese, 14 years old:

I used to live in Leku and there my father became sick and died. My mother sold our house and we came to Awassa and opened a small cafe. After two years my mother became sick as well and died. With this, me and my two sisters were poor and without a home. We had no food and this disturbed our lives. One person told the center about us and later I asked the center if we could enter. Me and my younger sister, Sitena, entered and now receive the project's help. We are so happy now! My older sister lives in another place and has finished secondary school. My sister Chi Gin is 18 years old.

Sitena Legese, 7 years old:

I live in center for 5 months. I am very happy to enter this center and the project helps me so much! I have a brother in the center. We have stayed together through this program. I am a 2nd grade student, and I want to be an excellent student. I want to be a doctor.

Binyame Wondafrerash, 7 years old:

I used to live in Nazareth. My father ran away and my mother died. I had no relatives to help me. I entered the center, and it is a great help to me. I am in the center for three weeks, I am the newest child! I am very happy to enter this place. I am a 1st grade student. I want to be a pilot. I learn in Tabor Primary School.

Kat ekidan Bern, 14 years old:

I am now 5 months in the center. I am so much happy to enter I want to be an excellent student. The center is a place you can finish your education! In the future I plan to help other children, I can already start by helping the little ones here.

Redeat Ashiber, 13 years old:

I am now in the Awassa Children's Program for 7 months. The center helps me so much. I have 2 sisters, please help them too! I want to be a doctor and when I finished my education. I will help my sisters.

Announcements

Benefit on World AIDS Day at The Wild Hare in Chicago!
Sunday, November 30th, 6-9 pm
3530 N. Clark St., Chicago

Welcome New Board Members!
Paul Chadha, Terri Glover, Krishna LeFan, Gary Liley



AWASSA MOOS FLASH!

By Jibriel Legese and Tesfaje Tekeliv

At the moment there are six cows in the center. The older cows are named Seeone, Bure, Ole and Magale. The two three-month-old baby cows are Monika (named after our friend and Art teacher who visited us from the U.S.) and Carolina.



Another one of the adult cows expects to have a baby in about two weeks!

Here's what two children say about the cows:

Redeat Ashiber:

"I am very happy that we have the cows because they give us very much nutrition. I like the cow Monika best because of her character. She never touches the children."

Jibriel Legese:

"The cows are often in the cow house and sometimes sound like human beings talking. Saturday and Sunday we have milk with tea for breakfast or milk combined with bread. Sometimes in the holiday we drink sour butter milk. We also sell the milk in the market.

All cows are good but Megale is the oldest and gives the most milk. Bure's behavior is very good. Two of the other cows don't give as much milk but they all provide healthful food."



Greetings from Monika Kimrey, New Board President

I want to begin by acknowledging our original Board President and trailblazer, David Schein, who firmly rooted the Chicago Chapter of the Awassa Children's Project.

David and his tenacious energy have moved to start a new branch of the Awassa Children's Project in New York, and I now carry the torch in Chicago. My goal is to continue to raise funds for new opportunities while bringing more children into the program, continue to spread the news of their health and growth and to connect our supporters with the individual voices of our Ethiopian youth.

These youth are building grassroots health initiatives targeting HIV-AIDS, Chat abuse and beyond. This year the program enrolled more children, contributing to a new generation of hope, stability and self-sufficiency in the region. These articles are a collaboration between the Chicago Board and some of our oldest and newest program participants in Awassa.

These vibrant children and teens are looking to you to extend their circle of support. Your involvement directly impacts these vital lives. They attend school, receive arts/vocational training, perform health education shows in the Rift Valley and have become a family to each other. These are responsible citizens who are powerful health and infrastructure advocates for their country.

I have made it known to my friends and family that if anyone wishes to present me with a gift, I am asking that all intention be directed to strengthening this project. I am returning to Ethiopia in 2004 to continue integrating the Arts into the vocational model of the center and to reunite with all of the friends that have become so dear to me. Thanks to your commitment, there will be new friends to meet and teach this year. Your support changes lives.

*With heartfelt thanks,
Monika Kimrey*