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ProjectsAbroad

FERENGE

ETHIOPIA

The Official Newsletter of Projects Abroad Ethiopia

April 2011 Issue No.35



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Welcome to the April 2011 Projects Abroad Ethiopia newsletter. This newsletter aims to inform all our volunteers with news and information about the latest happenings in Projects Abroad Ethiopia, and the country in general.

We would like to thank all the people who have volunteered with us – we really appreciate all the valuable time and great help you gave at the different placements. We would like to say thank you to all the volunteers who decided to choose Ethiopia for volunteering through Projects Abroad.

Enjoy reading this issue and I hope that you will find something that you like. Thanks to our volunteers who have shared their stories and photos with us.

We encourage everyone to join us in making the newsletter interesting and exciting by sending in your own written articles and pictures of your experiences here with us. Your stories and pictures will help others to understand and learn about Ethiopia. If you have anything you'd like to contribute, suggest, or comment on, please contact:

bikeseгнаhaileleul@projects-abroad.org

Enjoy!!!!

Let sleeping giants roam

A caged male panthera Leo Abyssinica at the Lions Zoo in Sidist Kilo.



By Henry Guyer from Switzerland – Journalism volunteer

“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the ways its animals are treated.” – M. Gandhi.

Every midnight, Yidnekachew Sahlu, the Veterinarian assistant at the Lions Zoo in Sidist Kilo –Addis Ababa, can hear the roar of the lions he tends to every day from his house by the British Embassy. In total there are 18 lions held at the zoo, a popular destination among many residents of Addis as an escape from urbanity. Parents bring their children to play in the small theme park, music blaring, as couples meander around in the modest garden, amidst caged lions, baboons, and geese.

The lions are the main attraction. From only two meters away, one of the newer enclosures holds two majestic males, their dark manes stretching down to their abdomen, a significant sign of the endemic Panthera Leo Abyssinica. “They belong to the East African sub-species of Barbari lions,” explained Yidnekachew. “However, there are no more left in the world, they were eradicated around 100 years ago, according to DNA analysis done by the Leipzig zoo. Further study is needed, but these could be the last ones.”

Yidnekachew is referring to the fact that the lions at the zoo are genetically different from their wild counterparts due to inbreeding over a few generations, making them a completely unique breed not found anywhere else in the world. According to Muhidin Abdulaziz, the Lion Zoo Administrator and acting manager for the past six years, Maxplank University in Germany is currently undertaking further studies to approve the endemic status to Ethiopia.

The original structure of the Lions Zoo, that houses the majority of the beasts, was built spherically so visitors can see the lions in various compartments from all angles. The lions strut around, in and out of sight, as onlookers try to wake them from their slumber by banging the fences and crying out to them,

with opportunistic photographers always on standby should a lucid moment arise.

Towards the back of the zoo, two lesser kudu's share a small grassy compound for grazing. Next to it, a small cement pond provides water for Egyptian geese and guinea fowls. Flanked on the other side of the bird enclosure, two caged gelada baboons attract plenty of interest, their kinship to humanity providing sardonic entertainment for visitors. After having seen these animals up close in the wild, watching a baboon grip the poles of its cage and looking desolately at the crowd, one can't help but feel forlorn for their plight.

According to Yidnekachew, despite being caged their whole lives the lions, he believes, are in good physical condition. The zoo has received help from Leipzig's zoo, Addis Ababa's sister city, which has provided it with medicine and contraceptive control since they do not currently have the capacity to take care for more lions.

As has been widely reported a few years ago, four cubs had to be put down due to the zoo's inability to take care of them. The question had been raised why such action had to be undertaken rather than finding other solutions, such as possible adoption by other institutions.



“Those reports were exaggerated,” explained Abdulaziz. “The cubs were deformed and sick. The cages were also overcrowded. It was more than our capacity to handle them, but if anyone was interested they could always help us.”

All of the 18 lions were born in the zoo. There were only a few lions when Yidnekachew first began working at the zoo ten years ago, when the general state of the zoo was very poor and relatively ignored by the populace and the city council.

“Actually,” Muhidin said, “those reports [of the cubs] also helped us because it brought attention to these lions from the city government and also from

overseas. Leipzig Zoo helped us due to the exaggerated reports.” He pointed out that the two new enclosures that hold the youngest four lions, around 3 and a half years old, were built as a result of the reports and it has greatly eased issues of space.

Currently, with the continued assistance of Leipzig Zoo, the lions use contraceptives to avoid a repeat of the past scandal and control the burgeoning population. By 2005, the city council began putting in more funds, most likely due to the light the reports shed on the plight of the lions, and built a cafeteria, kiosk, a children’s amusement park, and additional offices.

Established in 1948 by Emperor Haile-Selassie, the seminal, donated lions, named Molla and Lullu, who had three cubs, hailed from Wollega Illu Babora and Sidamo in south-west Ethiopia. As the story is told, the lions were presented to Emperor Haile-Selassie as gifts while he was out hunting. “All the lions [at the zoo] are direct descendents from the original lions,” added Yidnekachew.

While well maintained and looked after, the current size of the Lions Zoo is discouraging for these regal creatures, whose sheer size and beauty has the ability to dwarf a man in the face of nature’s prowess. The cages are, however, depressingly too small for them. The younger ones especially run to and fro in agitation to expend their energy. One can imagine them roaming in the wild in the savanna, yet in a zoo they are kept caged, listlessly devoid of life, almost always asleep or pacing back and forth restlessly. One hopes this doesn’t last much longer.

“We are building a new zoo in Peacock Park on 26 hectares of land that is in the design phase right now and that part will be finished in two months,” remarked Yidnekachew. “It will be built in four phases. The first phase is for lions and crocodiles, which will be finished in two years time. A cage is not good for the lions. They will have one hundred square meters of free space.”

Both Yidnekachew and Muhidin were pleased with the developments at Peacock Park, for the sake of the animals as well as the city of Addis. With the help from Leipzig Zoo, Addis Ababa’s new zoo will be up to “international

standards”, as Muhidin put it. “The park will include endemic animals and we will construct representations of regional environments for them. The location is also about accessibility for the people. So it will be good for animals and visitors alike,” he revealed.

While any increase of land is welcome, there are also other aspects of the prospective project to consider. “I am not sure whether Peacock is an ideal place for this purpose since it is a crowded quarter surrounded by big residences,” said Dr. Tekelye Bekele from the Society for Animal Welfare. “Sidist Kilo is on high ground compared with Peacock area. Parasitic problems could be abundant in such a low-lying place. Hence health and overall safety must be given priority.”

When it comes down to the welfare of the lions, however, Dr. Tekelye seems to approve of any improvement of conditions. “Anyway, another lions zoo at Peacock could be an outlet for overcoming overpopulation and periodic killing of young cubs and/or neutering by spaying or castration at Sidist Kilo zoo. It could also be another place for sheltering and maintaining these rare lions, which are different from their wild relatives due to close inbreeding.”

Where poverty is rife and general human welfare still deep-rooted issues to be tackled, the rights and welfare of animals have never been a priority, and understandably so. The mistreatment of animals can be observed at a personal level between the relationship between man and beast, as well as the systematic exhibitionism we have created of animals. For all of man’s progress when it comes to modern civilisation, in the question of animal rights and their humane treatment, we have not progressed a single inch.

Muhidin informed me, as I packed my bag at the end of the interview, that these lions, as well as all wild animals, are special and that we maintain a bond with them. A wild animal takes us away from our urban sprawl, our continuous detachment from the natural world, what Freud called the discontents of civilisation, and places us back into the womb of nature, where we have always innately longed to return.

...bits and pieces of information of the happenings in Ethiopia.

WHAT IS HAPPENING



MONTHLY VOLUNTEERS' DINNER – the office organised volunteers' monthly dinner at 2000 Habesha Traditional restaurant and volunteers got together for the meal and to watch traditional Ethiopian dancing.

FISTULA HOSPITAL VISIT - the office organised a visit of Fistula Hospital, unique in its kindness and services offered to the women which have got Fistula problems, mostly from rural areas. It was good visit and help volunteers to understand about Fistula problem.



NGO Market Day – Volunteers had a social event to go to at NGO market at Evangelical Church and volunteers had good time and did some shopping.

Volunteers gathering - We had a social gathering at Kaldis coffee, around the Bole area, and had tea and coffee together.

APRIL EVENT PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEERS

PROJECTS ABROAD ETHIOPIA OFFICE EVENT PROGRAMME - April 2011

DATE	TIME	PLACE	PROGRAMME	DESCRIPTION	EVENT IN CHARGE
Saturday, April 9	2:30 pm - 06 :00 pm	Edna mall Cinema Hall	Watching English Cinema	There will be an English Movie and get together for all volunteers	Bikeseegn
Friday , April 16	9:00 am – 1:00 pm	Lemlem School	Dirty Weekend	Volunteers will do mural activities at Lemlem School	Sami and Bikeseegn
Friday , March 22	2:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Projects Abroad Ethiopia office	Workshop for care and teaching volunteers	Workshop will organize for teaching and care volunteers.	Bikeseegn
Saturday , April 23	10:30 am – 2:30 pm	Entoto Mountain	Entoto Mountain Visit	Volunteers will visit Entoto Mountain	Bikeseegn
Saturday, April 30	7:30 pm - 11:00 pm	2000 Habesha Traditional Restaurant	Monthly volunteers Dinner	All volunteers get together for dinner and Watch Ethiopian traditional Dance	Sami and Bikeseegn
Saturday, April 30	8:00 am – 11 :00 am	Ethiopian Evangelical Church, Sar Bet.	NGO market and hand craft event	Fantastic opportunity to see and buy a wide variety of Ethiopian souvenirs. There is a huge variety of beautiful fabrics, scarves, bags, Jewelries of all sorts and styles, baskets, woven plates and dishes, wooden arts, pottery in every style with lovely decoration and much, much more.	Bikeseegn



Ethiopian food - Enjera with Shiro



Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony



Abstract Painting at National Museum by Maitre Afewerke Tekle



Volunteers on
Action at Placement.



Volunteers at
Restaurant



Volunteers ,Staffs ,School
teachers after doing
mural activities at
Lemlem School

From Arielle blog [by Arielle and Sarah, Care volunteer for three months, from USA]

True Life:

.....Continued from last time



So moving along. As requested, I'll try to write with more detail. It's also been requested that I write more about my feelings. but I'm obviously rock hard and don't have any. I'll try to include that stuff as well you picky readers, you !!

I'll start with the weekend. Saturday morning we went to a

film festival with OPRIFS. A year or so ago a company called Whiz Kids came to OPRIFS (our placement) to put on a film workshop. The company chose 23 children who learned how to make a 1-minute film in a matter of 4 days. Most of the girls have never touched a camera before, so it was a really good experience for them. The film festival was showing the 1 minute films, and since some of the girls we work with made films, we thought it would be really nice for us to go. It was supposed to start at 9:30 but didn't start till 11 (sounds like an Alpha Chi event) and about 3 people gave speeches. Some of it was in Amharic and some of the speeches were in English, so it wasn't terrible for us. We saw the first half of the one minute films and they were all so amazing! The 15-year-old Kassach, who we love at OPRIFS, not sure if I've mentioned her but I know Sarah has, made one of the films. It was about her move from rural Ethiopia to the city, and how she had no clothes and the girls at school made fun of her. She loved to read, and books made her feel better, and that's what her movie showed. It was really inspiring to see the girls expressing

themselves creatively, and we're hoping to do more of that during our time with them.

Later that day we went to Merkato- Africa's first and largest open-air market. Everyone told us not to go alone because we would get lost in the huge crowd and never find our way out. So, we decided to do it without a local. We met up with some other volunteers and walked all around Merkato. Everyone made it seem like our hair would be pulled and people would steal money from our pockets but honestly, we were totally fine. It was a huge part of the city and had some outdoor stands and some big buildings similar to malls, but the floors had merchandise everywhere instead of in separate stores, although there were some stores too. It was fun to walk around and see a different part of the city, but other than that it was filled with mostly junky stuff. Later that night we went out for dinner with some other volunteers and we were going to go out after, but Sarah didn't feel very well and I started to get a little dizzy so we made the wise choice of calling it a night. Hopefully next weekend I'll have some more Ethiopian club scenes to write about!

Sunday, as I was brushing my teeth, all of a sudden I heard the Spice Girls. I was singing along and suddenly realised I wasn't just hearing the Spice Girls, I was hearing them in AFRICA! I ran into the living room, toothpaste dripping down my chin, to see where on earth it was coming from. They were playing behind the news on TV! Umm, can you say GOOD JOURNALISM?! Seriously I thought this was something only I would come up with! So great, I thought I'd share.

Later that morning on our way out the door for brunch (yep, we're bringing Sunday New York City brunch to Addis) we saw a man walking, holding a goat by his hind legs. Just a normal day here in Ethiopia! Also, really quick, I wanted to get my shoes shined on the way (they get so dirty here and there are street kids everywhere who shoe shine for a living). I was waiting to spot a little kid to do it, and walked by a kid when all of a sudden I heard John Mayer playing from his radio. I took this as a sign and listened to JM in the streets of Addis while getting my shoes shined. AMAZING DAY!

Okay so onto more cultural things. Niki (friend of blogger) asked me about typical workdays. Great question, Niki, I'm glad you asked!! Normal working hours are from

8:30-5, with an hour for lunch. They also work 6 days a week- taking half days on Saturdays. I totally forget what the average salary is, but I'll find out and post it some other time.

Also a common site to see here is street people grilling corn over a small fire. At first I thought it was because corn was cheap, but apparently it's only so common because corn is in season right now. Our family made some for us the other day, and they burn it like Indians do. The kernels were humungous, I was pulling them off with my fingers and it tasted just like popcorn! Delicious.

Little cafes and coffee shops are a huge culture thing here. They're everywhere you look and I love them because they're authentic- not like Starbucks or Dunkin Doughnuts. The coffee here is so delicious and only needs a little bit of sugar. For those of you who don't know, coffee was first founded in Ethiopia so naturally it tastes amazing. I'm glad I'm not a coffee drinker at home because it would suck to go from drinking Ethiopian coffee to the coffee they have at home.

I also never wrote about the weather. I know I told many of you, but this is the rainy season and is considered Ethiopia's winter. It rains at least once a day and it's hailed 3 times since we've been here. My rain boots were the best purchase I made for the trip! It doesn't get too cold though, which is good, but it's not the typical hot "African" weather you would expect. (aka- I'm not getting a tan and I'm a little upset about it.)

I also wanted to write a little more about OPRIFS and the organisation itself since I know much more about it now. I always forget what I've written on the blog. The girls who are sent here come from families who live in rural parts of Ethiopia. They were sent away to relatives who live in the city who have promised them a better life and education. Once they came to their relatives, they were physically or sexually abused, and so the children ran away to the streets. The police find them and bring them to OPRIFS, where they live temporarily. If the children have parents who are still alive, they try to find their parents and reconnect them. If they don't have parents, they try to find orphanages who will take them, although it's hard because many of them are older. When they get to OPRIFS they are given clothing and notebooks, etc so they can learn. They practice hygiene, forgiveness, and are given therapy sessions. When they are reconnected with their families, they are sent home

with backpacks and books to encourage them to learn, and OPRIFS checks in on them to make sure they are safe.

Hmm, hope I'm not missing anything! Ohh.. my EMOTIONS. Well, I will say that I'm fully adjusted and getting used to life here. It's normal to be stopped every 2 seconds by Ethiopians asking if we are fine. I'm used to walking next to cows and goats, eating with my hands, and not always having toilet paper in the bathrooms (We live by the phrase "though shalt not leave thy house without something to wipe thy bottom," courtesy of book, *The Lost Girls*). It took a little while, but I'm definitely getting used to it and obviously loving every second. I'm so glad I'm here for 2 months, because it took half a month just to get adjusted, and the rest of the time it'll be nice to enjoy everything, travel to other parts of the country, and to really help the girl's progress. It's definitely sad to see the poverty, and most importantly the handicapped and homeless people with diseases but we do the best we can. On days that we don't like the lunch our family makes us, we go out for lunch (this only costs about \$3) and give our food to homeless children and beggars. There's nothing about this city besides the poverty that makes it seem third world, so it hasn't been as hard as I thought. Seriously, anyone can do it- even the weakest of hearts. If I can do it without crying (seriously, I cried over the "stinky" commercial and that was supposed to be funny!) anyone can.

Through the next month we'll be visiting other placements and orphanages, so I'm sure it will be more emotional then, but for now it's really been fine. Seeing the girls at OPRIFS being so happy and constantly smiling has also made it much easier. You just have to remember that you might think your life is hard, but there's someone who has run away from an abusive home, has been wearing the same dress that doesn't even fit for weeks, and is still smiling and laughing while jumping rope.

That's enough deepness for now.

Out of Addis – For your Visit

(Taken from what is out Addis)

Traditional Ethiopian Architecture



Many of the traditional styles of houses in Ethiopia are round dwellings with cylindrical walls made of wattle and daub, referred to as 'chikka'. The roofs are conical and made of thatch.

A traditional Ethiopian rural home built in cylindrical fashion with walls made of wattle and daub.

The central pole in this style of house has sacred significance in most ethnic groups, including the Oromo, Gurage, Amhara, and

Tigreans. Variations on this design occur. In the town of Lalibella the walls of many houses are made of stone and are two-storied, while in parts of Tigre, houses are traditionally rectangular.

In more urban areas, a mixture of tradition and modernity is reflected in the architecture. The thatched roofs often are replaced with tin or steel roofing. The wealthier suburbs of Addis Ababa have multi-storey residences made of concrete and tile that are very western in form. Addis Ababa, which became the capital in 1887, has a variety of architectural styles. The city was not planned, resulting in a mixture of housing styles. Communities of wattle-and-daub tin-roofed houses often lie next to neighborhoods of one and two-story gated concrete buildings.

Many churches and monasteries in the northern region are carved out of solid rock, including the twelve rock-hewn monolithic churches of Lalibela. The town is named after the thirteenth-century king who supervised its construction. The construction of the churches is shrouded in mystery, and several are over thirty-five feet high. The most famous, Beta Giorgis, is carved in the shape of a cross and is entirely sub-ground level. Each church is unique in shape and size. The Lalibela churches are not solely remnants of the past or an interesting tourist site, but function together as an active eight-hundred-year-old Christian sanctuary.

OVERVIEW ABOUT ETHIOPIA

Location

Horn of Africa.

Time

GMT + 3.

Calendar

Ethiopia uses the Julian calendar. This year is now 2002. Their New Year (Enkutatash) is on 11 September. Most Western countries now use the Gregorian Calendar.

Area

1,133,380 sq km (437,600 sq miles).

Population

82.5 million (2008).

Capital

Addis Ababa. Population: 3.6 million (2007).

Religion

Ethiopian Orthodox (Tewahido) and Coptic Church, mainly in the north, 40%; Islam, mainly in the east and south, 40%. There are also significant animist, Evangelical, Protestant and Roman Catholic communities.

History

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) of incumbent Premier Meles Zenawi won bitterly contested elections in May 2005. The elections this year in 2010 were far more peaceful and delivered Meles his fourth five-

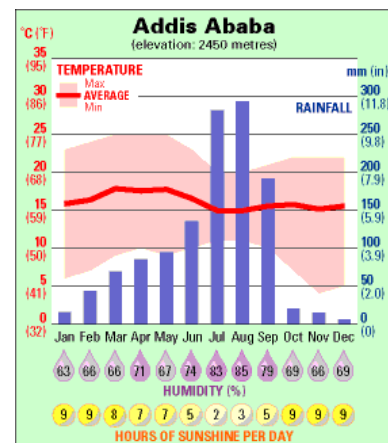
year mandate as prime minister. Ethiopia is currently enjoying a relatively stable political period despite a sharp increase in public support for opposition parties.



Language

Amharic is the official language, although about 80 other native tongues are spoken including Oromo, Somali and Tigrinya. English and Arabic are widely used and some Italian and French is spoken.

ADDIS ABABA CLIMATE



Electricity Supply



Electricity in Ethiopia is
220 volts AC, 50Hz.

Most modern electrical devices will accept input power supplies of 100~240v and 50/60Hz so they should work with Ethiopian power supply.

Most Ethiopian hotels have 2-PIN round power sockets of various types that will accept the standard Euro plug 2-pin plugs. Some places will

also have power adapters that are of Chinese origin and will accept most types of power plugs.

However, it is recommended to bring several 2-PIN round plug adapters to suit your equipment plugs.

ETHIOPIAN MONEY

Ethiopia's currency is called birr. It's divided into 100 cents in 1, 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent coins, and there are 1, 5, 10, 50 and 100 birr notes.



One Birr note



Five Birr note



Ten Birr note



Hundred Birr note

ART GALLERIES ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN EXHIBITION WORKS OF ART IN ADDIS ABABA.

NAME OF THE GALLERY	ADDRESS	LOCATION	VISITING DAYS/HOUR
Abyssinia Art Gallery	251-911-213059	Inside Addis Ababa museum compound	Monday - Saturday 9:00 am - 6:00 pm Saturday 9:00 am - 12:00 noon
Abyssinia fine Art school and studio	251-911- 235810 251-911-577570	In front of Nazareth school	-
Addis art studio	251-911-619416	Opposite to Ras Amba Hotel	-
Alem Gallery	251-911-641352	Inside Alem Cinema (bole road)	-
Artistic Glass Center	251-115-518400 Ext.632	Lobby at Addis Ababa Hilton	-
Assni Art Gallery	251-111-117360 251-111-238796	Omedla Road	-
Chilot Art Gallery	251-115-533329 251-113-712443	Kazainchis	-
Contemporary Ethiopia Art Bazar pan Africa Gallery	251-116-186333 251-911-201755	Around Rwanda Embassy	Monday - Saturday
Dams Art Studio	251-114-666199 251-911-252075	Beklobet near showa Bakery	Monday - Saturday
Dream Gallery	251-911-215333	Dream club-Elsa (Wollosefer)	Monday - Saturday
Eatale art studio	251-911-611769 251-911-674046	Near Fasika Restaurant	Monday - Saturday
Goshu Art Gallery	251-116-614747 251-116-610397	Near Atlas hotel	Monday - Saturday
Habesha Art Studio	251-111-112137 251-111-233394	Opposite to Ras Amba Hotel	Monday - Saturday
Image Africa Gallery	251-116-638744 251-911-657431	Tana Building (Bole Road)	Monday - Saturday
Lucy/ Dinknesh/ Gallery and Recreation center	251-112-530121 251-911-203585	Near Repi Medehanialem (Sebeta Road)	Monday - Saturday

Makush Gallery	251-115-526848 251-115-526855	Mega Building	Monday - Saturday
Rico's Digital Art Center	251-115-539462	Bole Road	Monday - Saturday
Sal Interior and Gallery	251-911-238696	Emewodish Building in front of International Evagelical Church	Monday - Saturday 8.30 - 7.00
Saron Studio	251-911-601584 251-911-605289 251-115-514829	Near Meskel Flower	-
Shaloms Art Studio	251-911-227992 251-116-624254	Behind Atlas	Monday - Saturday 9.30-6.30 pm
Universal Gallery of Arts and Exotic Garden	251-116-185575 251-911-215489 251-116-185575	Near Atlas Hotel	Monday - Saturday 8.30 am - 6.30 pm
Untitled Art Syudion	251-911-689163 251-114-401079	Wollo Sefer	Monday - Saturday
Wasyhune Art Gallery	251-111-117554	At the panoramic View on Entoto Mountains	-
ZEWD Ethiopian Creations	251-116-186258	South Africa street	-
Zoma Contemporary Art Center	251-113-210898	Mekanisa	-

Source: Ministry of culture and Tourism and what's up Addis a monthly business Guide published by –cactus plc.

Social Media – Projects Abroad Ethiopia office

**Join our official Facebook Group: Projects Abroad
Ethiopia – The Official Group**

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=21209375096>

Read our monthly newsletters.

<http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/volunteer-destinations/ethiopia/newsletters-from-ethiopia/>

**See what is going on with Projects Abroad! Read
our Country Blog!**

http://www.mytripblog.org/mod/blog/group_blogs.php?gl=true&group_guid=2873