

HELPING THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA SINCE 1971

# ANGOLA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

www.angolamsf.org

Spring 2021



Pastry making lecture

## IECA Women's Association Report:

### *Many accomplishments despite the pandemic*

Readers may remember reviewing the Women's Association progress report in our Fall 2020 issue, in which the COVID-19 situation in Angola was described, as well as the creative responses emerging among church women's groups.

<http://angolamsf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/AMSF-Fall-2020-Full.pdf>

In spite of stringent COVID-19 restrictions, the Women's Association have offered the following:

- Vocational training in mask making and soap production from used cooking oil, offered in

Huambo and Huila for 49 youth, 68 women and 21 pastors. Notes: During COVID-19 commercial soap has more than tripled in price. Recycling cooking oil is a recognized anti-pollution strategy

- Literacy classes, offered in Kwanza Norte from February – December 2020, to 276 students - children and adults, male and female
- *COVID-19 Community Awareness and Stigma Reduction Train the Trainer* sessions, offered in Huambo and Luanda, in September, to 29 women
- Presentation to 29 women leaders in Luanda, in September, on COVID-19 related stress and frustrations in families, and ways leaders and families can address those issues skillfully.
- Pastoral training in Luanda, in October, to 15 women and 23 men, all health technicians, in how to practice diaconia, to increase hope for caregivers and to respect and care for the moral and spiritual state of patients.
- Online training in Luanda, Benguela, Huambo and Namibe, in August, for 50 women, in *gender-based violence in rural and urban areas* - to enhance knowledge of women's rights, the causes

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## Glossary >>>

» **AMSF**

Angola Memorial Scholarship Fund

» **CICA**

Council of Christian Churches of Angola

» **IECA**

Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola



Soap making

## AMSF is Grateful for Donations

### ~In Honour Of~

»Dr Betty Bridgman

»Jean Burgess

»Rev David Gilchrist on his 92nd birthday

»Eleanor Knight

» Marilyn McKim

» Rev Joyce Myers-Brown

### ~In Memory Of~

»Rev Ed Brown

»Rev Tom & Bev Brown

»Rev Whitney and sister Bessie Dalrymple

»Peter deMarsh

»Dr Sid & Frankie Gilchrist

& daughter Betty Gilchrist

»Dr Gilchrist's family

»Helen Doidge Hall nee Burgess

»Florence Mary Huston

»Sylvia Krebs

»Rev Ed & Virginia LeMaster

»Rev Bob & Margery Malcolm

»Fran & Robin Markham

»Rev Curtis & Mrs. McDowell

»Edith Radley

»Rev Etta Snow

»Rev Harold Steed

»Lillian Taylor

»“Amazing Aunt Helen,” husband George  
& kids

# Progress Report from CICA Scholarship Program

To quote from the translated report received, “ *We would like to thank you for your kindness and willingness to support disadvantaged families with scholarships. Because of the pandemic, the Angolan Government has readjusted the school year, which it is now from September 2020 to June 2021. The 2020 AMSF grant of US\$20,000 is supporting 10 female and 6 male scholarship recipients, from 10 CICA member churches. The courses they are enrolled in, in 8 different provinces, include, accounting and management, agriculture-animal production, clinical analysis, economics, estomology, geographic engineering, law, nursing, physics, preschool education, public health and theology.*” Scholarship recipient Virginia João Fernando is from Porto Amboim, Cuanza Sul Province. She is a student at the Instituto Agrário do Waku Kungo,

living in this boarding school, which closed for a period because of COVID-19. She writes, “ *Thanks to the support of AMSF, I am training in Agronomy to support peasant communities in family farming. Enhanced community-level farming helps to diversify the economy of my country, which is experiencing the problems of petroleum dependence. Without the CICA scholarship, my widowed mother would not be able to send me to school. I am grateful to the individual AMSF members and donors. God bless and multiply the work of your hands.*” You can see Images of the Agricultural Institute in Waku Kungo in the youtube clip of *Angola Magazine - Alunos do Instituto médio agrário do Waku kungo* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3jI4Jysoqr4>

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of violence and the importance of a gender approach in community work, as well as to provide knowledge of gender equity, leadership and advocacy which can increase women's participation in decision-making positions

- Seminars in Luanda, Benguela, Huambo and Kwanza Norte, in September and November, for 298 women, on how to raise awareness of gender-based violence, women's rights, ways to prevent this kind of violence and how to act if it happens
- Pastry making courses for small businesses in Luanda, Huila and Kwanza Norte, in September and November, for 60 mature and 20 young women.

The recent education program of the IECA Women's Association, supported by the US\$20,000 AMSF grant, addresses issues heightened by the pandemic that touch women world-wide.



Note-taking, soapmaking demonstration



# AMSF remembers the LeMasters by supporting the Quessua Literacy Program

By Icel Rodriguez

AMSF member and director of Global Missions, Florida United Methodist

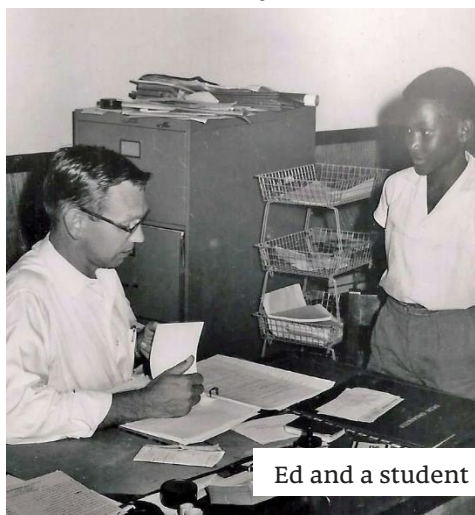
*Note: Former United Methodist missionaries to Angola, Rev, Ed and Virginia LeMaster, were faithful AMSF members; Ed served on the Board, including as President.*

Over the last few years, AMSF has been instrumental in constructing chapels/classrooms in several villages around the Quessua Mission in Malange. These communities are far from regular elementary schools, so this outreach support from AMSF is helping hundreds of children to attend school. From a significant grant given for the purchase of Bibles to brick-and-mortar grants, the AMSF has generously and consistently supported education in Quessua. In 2009 as my family and I were preparing to go to Angola, I received a letter from former missionary to Quessua, Rev. Ed LeMaster. Among many other wonderful memories, he shared one that stuck with me:

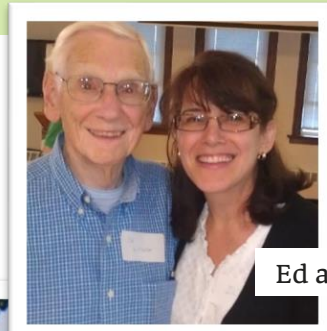
*“One of my first responsibilities as Director of Escola Luz was to send two young fellows, who had completed Quarta Classe (grade 4) out to teach in villages. I remember how guilty I felt that they were being sent out without more preparation. So, I began talking up the idea of Escola Normal for the training of teachers. And out of Escola Normal I realized that even this was not enough, thus, the idea of Colegio do Quessua (high school). The first dream was to prepare*

*students in Primeiro Ciclo and it grew into 5 years of Liceu. At Quessua, then, we had the second secondary school on a Protestant missionary station. Dondi*

*was the first one.”* We are delighted that Quessua resident Ruthie Schaad has partnered with us in honoring Ed’s dream and vision to send out Colegio students to teach in the villages. Ruthie provides oversight to the Quessua literacy/after school program with passion and excellence. The young women and men that are part of this outreach are expected to live in a true Christian way, show



Ed and a student



Ed and Icel



The LeMasters in Quessua with daughter Kathy, a current AMSF member.

excellence in academics, and possess a deep desire to serve the community, particularly the children. Unfortunately, because of COVID-19, these mentors’ work has been interrupted for about a year. However, given that there are no COVID-19 cases in the Quessua area and that schools are reopening, we are expecting that this program will soon resume.

This year, AMSF is providing a \$3,000 one-time gift in honor of Ed and Virginia LeMaster towards supporting the literacy program of the Quessua Mission over the next three years. Praise the Lord for generous servants that live out Jesus’ call to serve those in need and for the life and ministry of Ed and Virginia LeMaster! Our gratitude goes out to all of you!

## How to Donate:

Donations may be made online at [www.angolamsf.org](http://www.angolamsf.org) or mailed to your AMSF Regional Representative whose addresses may be found on the AMSF website. Cheques should be made out to AMSF. They can also be sent directly to AMSF Treasurer, Eleanor Ellins, at: 2016-1333 Bloor St., Mississauga, ON L4Y 3T6

# Why I support AMSF

By Neil Burgess, AMSF Atlantic Canada Regional Rep

I was born in Angola to medical missionaries and longtime AMSF supporters, Phyllis and George Burgess. My four siblings have also had a variety of roles supporting AMSF. We have all travelled back to Angola over the years to reconnect and see projects in action. As the Atlantic Canada representative, my role is to mail out newsletters twice a year and forward contributions to the treasurer. This is a pretty straight forward job, taking up a few hours of folding and addressing envelopes. One way I help keep administrative costs to a minimum is to purchase the envelopes and stamps myself. When supporting a charity, one of the things I first look for is the administrative cost in their financial statements. AMSF works hard to keep these costs under 5%, so I know over 95% of contributions go directly to projects. In a country where many people live on a few dollars a week, it may not take much to fund a group learning new skills so they can gain a sense of personal value and expand their earning power which in turn pays for medical care and school fees. A scholarship will help a bright young Angolan attain an education so they too can support a family and give back to their community. These are carefully managed projects that pay back dividends for many years from that initial contribution you made to AMSF. Oh, and the tradition continues - our daughter, Anna Joy has



NEIL AND FRIENDS WASHING PUPPY

stuffed many envelopes, and rebuilt the website last summer (<http://angolamsf.org/>). She continues to manage the site with both content and technical updates. I cover the cost of hosting and maintenance, again to help keep AMSF costs down. The conclusion you might draw is that we support AMSF because it's a family tradition to do so. Well, it goes a lot deeper than that.

Our parents taught us about service to others, which is why I've also been a member of Rotary International for 18 years now. There are many reasons of course why I believe service to others is important, but one of the catalysts for me was an event I witnessed in 1975. We had to leave Angola on short notice because the civil war was expanding. In my opinion, this

29-year war that destroyed lives and the country would not have taken place if Angola was not a resource rich country. There were so many foreign interests, it was hard to keep track of who was supplying money and weapons to whom. And through the whole war, oil production and mining continued to line the pockets of wealthy outside players while the Angolans suffered more and more. But the one event, the one vision that really caught the attention of 12-year-old me, was seeing the long lines of people fleeing a conflict area with whatever possessions they could carry. Parents looked terrified and children were crying - you don't forget a scene like that. I knew I was leaving the country and would be safe, but they would never be safe and whatever they thought was to come, was nowhere near the horrors that enveloped the country. Right there and then, I knew I had to help others less fortunate in the world. I have been incredibly lucky and live a life of privilege in Canada. The very least I can do is help others as part of my daily work, and through community and charitable activities - both in giving time and money. So this is why I support AMSF.



Check out What's New [angolamsf.org](http://angolamsf.org) and AMSF Facebook (marked with a black & white circle) - Memorial profile of IECA leader Dona Celita Epalanga & a bit on the life of Jeanette Miller, founder of Ebenezer Mission Orphanage Boarding School in southern Angola!