

Orphanage Fund Honors Legacy of John Foss

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Foss love of music brought smiles to the faces of the orphaned Sudanese girls when he performed with his guitar, according to Roshan Foss, Anglin, John Foss' daughter.

When North Dakota Unificationist John Foss ascended suddenly at his home in Fargo on April 10, 2013, his family was understandably shocked and heart-broken. But it didn't take long for his spouse and adult children to set up a memorial for the cause that the husband and father dearly loved: a girls' orphanage in South Sudan.



Foss' family and friends formed a team fundraiser via the online fundraising site, crowdrise.com on April 22, 2013 to support *African Soul, American Heart (ASAH)*. In just eight days the John Emerson Foss Memorial fundraising team surpassed its goal of \$10,000.



Foss, better known as “Jef,” lived in Fargo, North Dakota with his wife Keiko. As a young man he had attended the University of Minnesota to study architecture and later did architectural work in New York City, working on the New Yorker Hotel and the Manhattan Center. He was Blessed in marriage to Keiko Hamada of Japan in 1982 and together they raised two children, son Rygo, and daughter, Roshan. Both children had moved out and were working in New York and Minnesota respectively when they learned of their father’s untimely passing. Roshan Foss Anglin wrote to Unification News that although his kids had grown up, making time for family came before anything for her dad.

“Even though we didn't see each other every day, we talked on the phone, video call, e-mailed, and saw each other a lot on weekends and holidays. He would never hesitate to come if we needed him. Summers were always our favorite time at the family cabin, and I spent as much time there as I could,” according to Roshan.



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A long civil war in South Sudan has brought several South Sudanese to the United States, and many have been settled in Fargo. While attending a book signing for Sudanese exile, John Akol Makeer, who wrote *From Africa to America: Story of a Lost Boy of Sudan*, Foss approached the president of the orphanage, mentioned his architectural background and offered his services to the organization.

African Soul, American Heart, is a school for orphan girls located in Duk County, Jonglei State, Republic of South Sudan. Foss served as a member, architect and site designer on the board of directors for the school.

In the early times of ASAH, during a book signing for the man who inspired ASAH an orphanage for girls, Foss happened to mention his architectural background and was able to fill a membership position as an architect that would help realize the dream of building a school in Africa.

“Our mission is to protect, educate, and empower fifty orphaned girls through primary school, secondary school and beyond. ASAH protects our students from forced marriage at puberty which may save their lives,” according to africansoulamericanheart.org



The John Foss Emerson Memorial raised \$10,000 in eight days to sponsor a cause Foss cared about: building a girl's orphanage in South Sudan.

Foss and his wife were planning to visit South Sudan in May 17, 2013. In his father's place, son Rygo plans to accompany his mother in continuing the trip to South Sudan despite their bereavement. Roshan Anglin and her husband, Korbin, plan to volunteer their time in the future towards the growing success of ASAH.

In commemoration of his father's project, his son Rygo decided to form an online fundraising team via crowdrise.com to continue supporting ASAH. The team included five members, Rygo, Keiko, Roshan, Susan Furr and ASAH President Deb Dawson.

According to his daughter, Roshan, not only did Foss care for the young women of South Sudan through his architectural work but also by music. He enjoyed using his outgoing personality, voice and guitar to bring smiles to the young girls' faces. For all who would dearly miss her father's music, his daughter, Roshan, created a playlist of music he recorded and was able to make copies for guests who attended the *Seonghwa* service.

“He was the most peaceful, generous, fun and loving man that I know. I am so blessed to be able to say that there has not been a day in my life that I wondered if somebody loved me,” Roshan Anglin tells Unification News.

To learn more about the mission of ASAH, visit their website africansoulamericanheart.org/, and to donate to the ASAH John Emerson Foss Memorial here www.crowdrise.com/asahjohnemersonfossmemorial/fundraiser/rygofoss