

WAHROONGA

Adventure in compassion



The Welch family is (from left) Jake, 16, Sarah, 9, Isaac, 12, Solomon, 4, Sam, 14, mum Sandi and dad Chris, Jessica, 2, Georgia, 7 and their dog, Lucy.

Picture: DAVID SWIFT

Cassandra Briedis

FAMILY OF 10 PERU-BOUND TO HELP HOSPITAL

A ROUTINE of reading bedtime stories to their seven children – and another baby on the way – has inspired a Wahroonga family to sell their belongings, move abroad and dedicate their lives to helping others.

After finishing the latest book in a series of Christian-themed biographies about German missionary doctor Klaus-Dieter John, Christopher and Sandi Welch de-

ecided they would stop reading about heroes and join forces with them instead.

Mr Welch, 50, a broadcast engineer, felt he was perfectly placed to assist in Dr John's purpose-built hospital in the remote area of Cuzco, Peru, after learning the next stage of construction included a media centre.

"In some cases, people would walk for up to three

days to the hospital and find the visiting resident specialist is not there and they'd have to walk home," he said.

Next April, the family of soon-to-be ten will move to Peru for three years where Mr Welch will take up the voluntary role of head engineer in the media centre.

"It comprises TV and radio studios that will be used to ... broadcast medical, general

health and social wellbeing information," he said.

Mr and Mrs Welch have been homeschooling their children with an emphasis on learning Spanish in preparation for their journey.

"There's a lot of excitement – for them it's an adventure," Mr Welch said.

"We've lost the desire for the white picket fence and we just want to help."

Their trip will be self-funded and they will also rely on donations from family, friends, Christian organisations and corporate sponsors.

"It's to save lives ... ultimately, that's what it's really all about," he said.

"We figured the best way for Sandi and I to do something is to just get there."

To donate to the Welch family visit the website at lifesource.org.au/welch-family-mission.