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STØTTEFORENINGEN FOR USA RIVER . TANZANIA

Usa River Children Centre Monthly letter, June 2010

The volunteers report:

This month we have had the pleasure of having almost all the children at home due to the holiday spirit, which has hit Tanzania – just standard 7 and the children attending Skt. Judes still have classes. The result of this has been that life at URCC this month, as well as every other month, has been unpredictable and filled with astonishing events.

The kids have an enviable ability to use their imaginations, and by it turning everything into a game, which during the day causes many laughs. For instance Saidi, at the age of six years, is able to entertain himself for several hours if only he has a bottle top, a piece of paper or for that matter just a small stone. When it comes to playing everything can be used, which also counts in the matter of food; the other day Fransisca & Eva were chewing on an old busted pencil, which I found a little bit odd. They explained to me that they simply love chewing on pencils which, in their view, taste just like pipi (sweets) ☺ It is so pleasant with a bunch of children, who are easily satisfied and grateful for what they have got! Below a couple of this month's events are described.

Tanzanite

A combination of good weather, a volunteer's donation and lucky children, resulted in a splendid day at the swimming pool of the local Hotel Tanzanite. After lunch, this concerned Saturday, the volunteers packed all children, swimsuits, towels and baby-care and took off to the hotel. Fortunately we were the only guests there, so we could play, swim, splash and bath all day long without disturbing anybody. Due to this nobody saved their vocal chords; there were screams, yells and happy howls of laughter because of the freezing water, in which the children perseveringly through themselves around. The favourite game was "find-a-coin-at-the-bottom"; a coin was thrown into the swimming pool, and then the children were diving in hope of finding it. All of us had the most lovely day filled with laughter and great big smiles, and both children and volunteers went to bed early that night ☺ Thanks Line, who donated this day.

Watoto Africa

Once more it was time for throwing a party. Each year in June people of Tanzania celebrate "Watoto Africa", which is an event focusing on the rights of children of Africa. Blair, the manager of the centre, announced this special day and in concert with the children he put together a traditional Tanzanian slap-up meal containing fries, meat and pili-pili (chilli) and a bunch of sodas. All day long the lovely food was cooking and the entire

centre smelled heavenly. Before we could eat this sumptuous meal we had to clean and decorate the dining hall. Everyone put in an effort and turned the room into a sparkling ballroom with balloons, big bows, colourful tablecloth, flowers and bright decorations. Finally, we were ready for eating the glorious food, and it was a wonderful pleasure watching the children eating and drinking until they were about to burst ☺ After finishing the meal we had a disco, where everybody were laughing, dancing and enjoying themselves. (Watoto=children)

A fancy visit

At the end of this month something surprisingly suddenly happened. Friday afternoon a bus full of American highschool students reached the centre, and a score of students swarmed out of the bus. As a result of an American project these children were able to go to Tanzania, with a view to learning about Tanzanian culture and way of life. The visitors were giving a thorough tour at the center, and got to know quit a bit about life here, and what we are doing during the days and weeks. After the tour our guests played with the children for several hours, and everybody enjoyed the day very much. Many pictures were taken, and the Americans were even brave enough to go lend their cameras to the children, from which they had a lot of pleasure. Thanks a lot to these people for visiting us, and giving a splendid donation, which the children at Usa River Children Centre will benefit by.

Parent meeting

June ended with a marvellous parent meeting (for the orphanages: grandparent meeting, siblings meeting or auntie-/uncle meeting) All children had invited one person to come, but unfortunately many didn't show up. In spite of a small attendance the day was a success, and everybody was pleased and happy to be reunited with their loved ones. Filbert of only eight years hadn't seen his mother for a very long time, and we were all moved to tears from overlooking how overwhelmed with happiness they were to see each other again. The purpose of the gathering was for parents etc. to meet the new manager Blair, and to tell them what we expect from them and their children living at the centre. Further on those, who had done exceptionally well on their examinations, were pointed out and given a round of applause for their hard work at school. Finally the children sang and made acrobatics while their families proudly watched, and cheered.