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STØTTEFORENINGEN FOR USA RIVER . TANZANIA

Usa River Children Centre, Letter of the Month, October 2009

Volunteers write from Usa River....

The month of October. Early on we said goodbye to Nikis parents, who return to Denmark, while the children and volunteers at the centre got used to the daily life without Karen. In spite of the many welcomes and goodbyes and especially the replacements of volunteers, we always find ourselves settled with the new routines and the centre lives on as well functioning as always.

10th Year Anniversary of URCC

In this manner, the 10th Year anniversary arrived on Monday October 19th. Because of practical reasons and logistics it was moved to the following day, but it was worth the wait. After the usual staff meeting, which was moved and as such began earlier than normal, all of the children, staff, volunteers as well as Geert and Mama gathered for a reception in Ottos house. The menu consisted of Pilau with accompaniments, sodas, and last but not least, a piece of cake, which was cut by the guests of honor, Najma and Saidi. This, combined with the good company made way for a nice hour. As at the recent graduation the children performed with song, dancing – where neither Mama nor Geert held back – and Geert and Prosper held speeches. Furthermore an impressive music centre had been lend which was used for the disco which the children had subsequently while the grownups went to Geerts corner and a continued celebration.

Nyerere Day

Medio October, a few days before the anniversary of the centre, there was a national holiday down here. On October 14. it was Nyerere day, the anniversary of his death. This meant that most people had the day off, and among these was all our children. We made use of this as we went with theme

class middle to the playground at Danish (the training centre of MS in Usa River), where both theme class small and theme class big had been recently. It was a pleasant trip in which the kids made use of the playground while we volunteers enjoyed the relative quiet in the shadow☺

A scary incident

This peace and quiet was needed as was the trip out of town. The night before had been marred by a murder just outside the centre. The festivities with the following day off in mind were considerable and this led two men to get into an argument which culminated when one of them drew a knife and killed his opponent. All of this took place on the other side of the road, about 40 meters from the centre. From the balcony we could hear a lot of yelling from out there and we knew that something was wrong. It was a quite a scary incident, which the locals didn't seem to bother too much about though. Oddo didn't seem all that affected when he met Martin immediately after the incident, and he greeted with the customary "Vipi!". Asked about the murderer, others restricted themselves and responded "we most likely won't see him again, he will probably get lifetime in jail." Altogether a peculiar night, but we have moved on since then.

Babu and Bibi Ejersbo

Luckily, a much nicer incident took place at the end of the month, when Hanne and Mogens joined us as volunteers. Due to their age, 68 and 76 respectively, it has been agreed that they live at Mama Kisanga's place at the end of the road, while working as volunteers at the centre. It has been quite jolly having them here. Due to their experiences from previous periods in Tanzania, and the fact that they know some Kiswahili, they are quite competent and the children and their new babu and bibi go on well together.

Karibu Tanzania

October also was the month where the short rain slowly started. After a slow beginning with a small dripping from the sky at night, we suddenly had a late afternoon with water pouring down and the remaining part of the month we had one or two serious showers daily. At the centre there are divided feelings about the weather change, but the many farmers in the country will certainly enjoy the rain, especially after the failing long rain earlier this year. That it sometimes gets a bit out of hand and the field next to the centre becomes a mire that reminds you of the worst festival weather one can imagine – and that a few volunteers have lost their malapas in a foolhardy trip across the

mire – that's another matter.

Welcome to Tanzania!