

OMARURU

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CHILDREN'S HAVEN

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Dear godparents

Dear friends and supports of the Omaruru Children's Haven

First of all I need to apologize that this is the first newsletter since May. An eventful six months have passed since you have received the last newsletter from Swakopmund.

The biggest project this year by far is the construction of a new building on the Omaruru Children's Haven's premises. Early 2014 this new building will become a home for seven children and one housemother and it will be run based on the concept of the SOS children's villages. Siblings of both sexes will live together in one house in small family-type groups. If you are a regular reader of our newsletters, then you know that we have already started this concept in 2012 with the reconstruction of the Hannelore Joel house. The yet unnamed, new building is another step to restructure the Omaruru Children's Haven's organization after the example of the SOS children's villages. If we manage to fully fund it in time, it is planned to reconstruct the current boys' dormitory in June/July 2014. Upon completion of this third construction phase in three years the Omaruru Children's Haven will be able to finalize the transformation from a dormitory-based, hostel-style accommodation to family-style small groups.

The walls of the new building are exceeding two meters already and completion of the roof is scheduled for mid-November. We expect the construction to be completed by the end of this year and readiness for occupation within the first two months of 2014. We want to thank all of our supporters and donors, who made this project possible. The Kids Unlimited foundation, the Förderverein Omaruru Children's Haven, the Rotary Club Segeberg, the proWIN foundation, Mr. Thilo von Gilsa, the Jäcker family and the readers of the Hessisch Niedersächsische Allgemeinen are mentioned explicitly in this place, because they contributed significantly to the funding of this project. But a motto of the protestant church in Germany is: "Many small people, who in many small places, do many small things, can alter the face of the earth". Unfortunately it would go beyond the scope of this newsletter, if I tried to mention every single person that carries the children of the Omaruru Children's Haven in their hearts. Representing all of these amazing, small people allow me to mention grades 7E and 9B of the Städtisches Gymnasium (Secondary School) Bad Segeberg, who organized a bake sale and a buffet respectively, grade 1T of the Phorms School Berlin South, who have collected donations for our children's home, Mick (eleven years) and Minja Bilharz (nine years), who donated their pocket money, toys and costume jewelry as well as Jan Baumann (ten years) who caught and smoked fish with his father and sold it to support the Omaruru Children's Haven.

Since I am already talking about amazing, young people: it has been our great pleasure to welcome the new group of volunteers between July and September, who will spend between six and twelve months in Namibia, giving their time, passion and love to the children of the Omaruru Children's Haven. We were saddened to see the volunteers depart that have worked so hard in the last twelve months for the advancement of our children's home. Jonna, Pia, Katrin, Julia, Dylan, Hannah and Maria have experienced an eventful and educational time in Omaruru and we wish them only the very best for the beginning (or continuation) of their studies. I believe that it speaks for the children and housemothers of the Omaruru Children's Haven, the cordiality of the Namibian people in general and the incredible beauty of this, our beloved country that in 2013 we were able to welcome for the second time Bettina, Johanna, Sonja and Friederike, all of whom have volunteered with us in 2012.

We are very happy that, in cooperation with the Freunde Waldorf from Karlsruhe, we have been able to become recognized as a host organization for the Weltwärts program of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. In early September we have welcomed our first two Weltwärts volunteers. This is a sign of the continuing improvement of our volunteer program, just like the six-week internship, that Bianca, student of "Farm and Household Management" at the Agricultural Training Centre Krumhuk, completed at the Omaruru Children's Haven.

In the health-care area we are very excited about the tremendous progress that our youngest boy made in the past six months since he began with speech and occupational therapy. To attend the therapy sessions he is driving every ten days with a housemother to Windhoek and back. We are very grateful to therapists Ms. Klemens and Dr. Jürgens and to Prof. Dr. Pieper, who realized the need for therapy and initiated the therapy sessions. Furthermore, Prof. Dr. Pieper has examined and treated several of our children free of charge, arranged follow-up examinations by specialists where necessary and repeatedly donated in-kind to our children's home.

We want to express a very warm welcome to Ms. Martina Perstling. Ms. Perstling is a children's psychologist and a very valuable addition to our team. She will come and visit the Omaruru Children's Haven every three weeks and is always available when we need recommendations or information as to how to deal with a specific issue with a child. Chaplain Anthonissen, who carried out this task last year, will continue to work with us as a mentor for the volunteers and contact person for housemothers and management.

This year saw four of our kids turn eighteen years. But that does not mean that they have to leave the Omaruru Children's Haven. As long as they continue schooling or pursue some kind of vocational training or academic education, these young adults will be cared for by the Omaruru Children's Haven's team. The unemployment rate in Namibia is somewhere between thirty and thirty-five percent. The unemployment rate for people holding a degree or having successfully completed vocational training is below two percent. So we know what we have to give our children in order to prepare them for a successful future. Three things: education, education, education.

Due to this we went to Windhoek with our "big ones" in October for two days to visit the University of Namibia and the Agricultural Training Centre Krumhuk. This trip was both educational and exciting for all four of them. Furthermore, we were able to convince Ms. Kaupumhote Pohamba, daughter of His Excellency Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia, to spend an evening with our two eighteen year old girls. She talked with them about what it means to be a young, independent, Namibian woman in the 21st century. The following dinner surely was the trip's highlight and we are eternally grateful for the friendliness and patience with which Ms. Pohamba answered all questions our children had ("How is it to be the president's daughter?", "Can you have a normal breakfast with your dad?",...).

Three of our children have just finished the grade ten examinations, which are standardized, nation-wide exams. We are hopeful that all three will pass the grade. With a failing rate of forty-six percent in Erongo Region in grade ten last year, this would be a major success. Furthermore, the examinations in the third trimester, which are relevant for passing or failing a grade are rapidly approaching and will be held in November. We are expecting a failing rate for the Omaruru Children's Haven of around twenty percent, which is at the same level like last year (2011 thirty-five percent), but unfortunately still far from our medium-term goal of ten to fifteen percent. We are blessed that with Mr. G. Tjinjama (S. I. !Gobs Senior Secondary School), Ms. N. Lewe (Ubasen Primary School) and Ms. R. Visser (Rektorin, Omaruru Primary School) we now have three representatives of local schools serving in our executive committee and we are certain that their skills and knowledge will help us to continue to improve our study time in order to bring us closer to reaching this ambitious goal.

Finally I want to use this opportunity to thank the Bank Windhoek, Omaruru branch team and the staff and management of Okajo guest and hunting lodge. As you can imagine the space in the Omaruru Children's Haven is pretty crowded right now due to the construction measures. Bank Windhoek's team organized a play day with games and braaing three weeks ago and last week our children were allowed to spend a weekend on the Okajo guest and hunting lodge. Pool party, burger lunch and game drive all inclusive. How much fun that was for everyone involved you can easily see in the attached picture. And the invitation for another visit during Christmas break is gladly accepted.

My best wishes for a wonderful November and a blessed Christmas time. We are currently experiencing the onset of summer with temperatures between thirty and thirty-five degrees centigrade and hope that an ample raining season will end the drought (as soon as the roof is up on the new building).

In January I will visit Europe for five weeks and hopefully meet some of you dear readers. In the meantime I am always available by email (info@omaruruchildrenshaven.org) should you have any questions, desires or recommendations.

My final, somewhat selfish plea to you, dear friends and supporters, is: please talk about us! If you know young people, who would be interested to volunteer with us as from July 2014, please have them contact me! Forward this newsletter to friends, colleagues and acquaintances! Housemothers, volunteers and management may be the immediately responsible people for the children of the Omaruru Children's Haven, but you, dear godparents, dear friends, dear supporters, are also a part of the Haven team. Without people like you, who open their hearts, who keep us in their prayers, who roll up their sleeves and act, we would not be able to care for our kids the way we do.

Many kind regards from Omaruru (also on behalf of the children and the entire team)



Andreas Möckel

(Manager, Omaruru Children's Haven)



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