

OMARURU

P.O. Box 665, Omaruru

+264 - 64 / 571 384



CHILDREN'S HAVEN

www.omaruruchildrenshaven.org

info@omaruruchildrenshaven.org

Dear godparents,

Dear friends and supporters of the Omaruru Children's Haven,

If the weather prognosis for Christmas in Western Europe with expected temperatures between five and ten degrees centigrade scares you than you can feel relieved. This is still far away from what we are experiencing every year in Omaruru. Our weather prognosis for Christmas Eve is temperatures of up to 35 degrees and we can only hope to see snow on Christmas postcards. Which is also the main reason why during the festive season scores of Namibians flock to the coast, because there the temperatures are at least tolerable. The Omaruru Children's Haven's Christmas differs significantly from what the media tells us a Christmas should look like – as indicated also by our little Christmas bush in the dining hall.

Currently the Omaruru Children's Haven is very quiet. Due to our close cooperation with Omaruru's social worker and our children's families we were able to have the majority of our fosterlings spend Christmas with their grandparents, aunts and uncles, and in a few exceptional cases even with their biological parents. Spending Christmas with their family, something that sounds so normal, so ordinary for most of us, is the greatest gift we are able to make to some of our kids. And we are very proud and happy that we could make this gift to a significant number of them, because even the best orphanage home will never be able to fully substitute a loving, caring family. Therefore, it is our most noble duty to reintegrate the children into their biological families, wherever it is possible without putting them in harm's way. Here, like in many facets of our work, we are taking the SOS Children's Villages as an example, which have a very refined concept for the reintegration of children.

After having reintegrated two brothers into their family at the end of 2012, we were able to reintegrate two more children into their respective families this year. Of course the main priority here is to evaluate whether the physical and mental well-being of the child in question will not be endangered by reintegrating them and whether the family (with support measures by the Omaruru Children's Haven if necessary) will be able to take proper care of the child. We are very happy about the positive experiences we've been able to make in the last two years in the areas of reintegration and after-care support. Both brothers, who were reintegrated in 2012, are currently in the Omaruru Children's Haven to spend Christmas with "their housemothers". The older one of the two is the first former Omaruru Children's Haven fosterling, who managed to enter an institution of tertiary education. The younger one will visit grade twelve next year and upon successful completion thereof receive his university entrance qualification – this would also be a first in the Omaruru Children's Haven's history.

Furthermore, we are very lucky that this year only one of our primary school learners has to repeat a grade, even though we know that this is partially due to the fact that several kids will be enrolled in special education next year. On the other hand, however, we are very happy that due to the close cooperation with the principal of Omaruru Primary School and due to the hard and dedicated work of the special education teacher, Ms. Sonia Visser, it will be possible to re-enroll our first special education learner into regular classes in January after only one year of attending special classes.

To achieve such progress a team is required, that is fully committed, that is in it with sense and sensibility. I would like to take this opportunity to specifically thank our five hard-working and dedicated housemothers Gerhardine, Otilie, Lena, Appolonia, and Penelao. Without their sacrifices, their willingness to learn and without their love and compassion we would never be able to make such tremendous progress in the quality of care we are able to provide. Take nothing away from Nelson Mandela or Sam Nujoma, but for me, those women are the true heroes of Africa. Mothers we thank you! Kai aios! Baaie dankie! Tangi unene!

For almost three years I have been working together with my co-manager Lazarus in the management of the Omaruru Children's Haven and at the beginning we often had to struggle with heavily traumatized children, who became aggressive against themselves and others on a regular basis. After having completely revamped our educational concept and working in depth with the children, housemothers and our psychologist, Ms. Perstling, nowadays I occasionally sit together with one of the housemothers in the yard, we look back and say things like: „Do you remember child XY three years ago? Now look how he/she is faring today!“

The entire team of the Omaruru Children's Haven is aware that without the amazing support from our friends all over the world we would be much farther away from our goal to achieve the best-possible care for our children. But we also know that we still have a long way to go and we truly hope that you, dear godparents, dear friends and supporters, will continue to walk this way with us.

Representing all the wonderful people, who have lent us a hand in increasing our capabilities to care for our children, I would like to name four supporters and organizations that have helped us in 2014 in creative and committed ways.

Our sincere gratitude goes to Dr. Frank Jäger and his wife Ute. Dr. Jäger, a cardiologist from my hometown Kassel, read an article about the Omaruru Children's Haven two years ago and told himself that during his next visit to Namibia he wanted to do some good for our little orphanage home. In August the two came to visit the Omaruru Children's Haven together with their son and Dr. Jäger examined all children, housemothers as well as various people from the Omaruru community and from our partner orphanage in Kalkfeld for possible cardiac defects. Such a preventive examination of close to fifty people would have been extremely hard to arrange in a rural area like Omaruru with the resources of the public health services.

Jan Baumann, 11 years old, and his parents have been fishing, smoking and selling fish for the Omaruru Children's Haven for more than a year (see newsletter October 2013). With their third campaign, that I had the honor to personally attend in November they generated donations of almost 15.000 NAD!!! And all of this was born from the sentence of a then ten year old uttered at dinner: "Hey dad! I would like to help people, who are not as well off as I am." Our gratitude and respect go to Jan Baumann and his parents Karsten and Tanja, who support and encourage their son's commitment in admirable fashion.

Many thanks to our supporters in Bad Segeberg! I've already extensively talked about their aid cargo shipment organized by the Rotary Club Segeberg in the last newsletter, which included a Volkswagen minibus (see picture two). But the support from Bad Segeberg is more far-reaching: volunteers, godparents, donors, networkers, many of our friends hail from this rural area in Germany. Without exaggerating I can state that without the help from Bad Segeberg the Omaruru Children's Haven would not be the place it is now. However, today I want to take the opportunity and specifically mention Torsten Kruse and Björn Pape, who tirelessly advocate our cause and are creative and active for the benefit of the children in our care. Torsten Kruse has been organizing the aid cargo shipments from Segeberg for a number of years and Björn Pape is the administrator of our godparent program. Thank you both so much for your perseverance and help! We are all looking forward to welcoming you in Omaruru next year!

The Lions Club Kassel-Wilhelmshöhe and especially the charity braai team (Andreas Schott, Uli Linß and Dr. Frank Schönherr) have significantly contributed to the installation of four solar water heating devices on our roofs. Ms. Uta Schellenberg and her husband Bernd, through creating and selling beautiful artwork and promoting the Omaruru Children's Haven in the Stuttgart area have contributed an equal share to the realization of this project. Through these solar heat devices we will be able to work more sustainably and economically. Our sincere gratitude goes out to all of you!

Meanwhile our new building has been completed. You can catch a small glimpse of the new children's rooms in the first picture. By the way, the wall colors have been picked by housemothers and children and the walls were painted by the kids themselves together with the volunteers. We had originally intended to also work on the reconstruction of the boys' and girls' blocks this year, but will only be able to commence that next year. The approval procedures with the responsible ministries and the municipality have unfortunately been far more complicated and time-consuming than expected.

We have come a long way in the last three years on our way to provide the best-possible support and care for our children. But we still have quite a bit more to go. However:

No way is long, with a friend at your side.

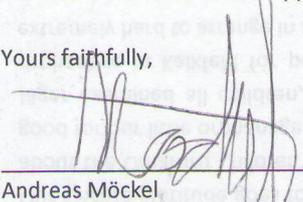
-Japanese wisdom

Will you walk with us for a bit?

Allow me to close with a well-known request: talk about us! Tell your relatives, friends and colleagues about our little orphanage in the heart of the Land of the Brave. You are a part of the Haven family and without your support our housemothers and volunteers would not be able to bless our children with such an unburdened and happy coming of age.

A blessed Christmas and a happy New Year 2015 to you and your families!

Yours faithfully,



Andreas Möckel
(Manager, Omaruru Children's Haven)



COLLEGE

HARRIS

FUN
in the TALK

