



Giving Filipino children a hope for the future

REHOBOTH CHILDREN'S HOMES TRUST

Registered Charity No. 1005152

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2011

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES : Philip Thompson

Having brought to your attention the seriousness of our financial situation earlier this year, we thought it right to bring you up to date with how matters are now and thank you for your ongoing interest and support.

We are most grateful to all who have responded in a variety of ways to the situation. Thank you to those who have made specific gifts towards the short-fall and to those who have increased their regular giving. Thank you also to those who have been praying about the situation. Our finances are in a



Ruth & Pat

healthier state now than they were six months ago for which we are very grateful. However, long term, we still need more regular income to sustain the work of the Home, so we ask you to continue praying about this and making the work known amongst any contacts you have. If you would like more specific information about this, please let us know.

We would also like to inform you about a change in Sponsorship Secretary. Pat Jacobs has faithfully served in this role for many years and we would like to record our heartfelt thanks to her for her dedication and service to the work of Rehoboth Children's Home. She has handed the responsibility over to Ruth Thorogood, one of our sponsors, who has visited the home on more than one occasion and we are pleased to welcome Ruth to the team as she takes up this new role. All correspondence concerning sponsorship should still be sent to the address at the end of this newsletter.

SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL 2011

The long awaited trip to Washington DC to represent the work of the US Peace Corps as part of their 50th Anniversary celebrations at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival was a great success. The young people were wonderful ambassadors of both the Philippines and Rehoboth and we were so proud of them. As well as attending the festival there was time to see some of the sights in and around Washington DC, visit and meet some of Tom and Leah's family and friends and meet with Filipinos living and working in the area. We attended church and at one the youngsters were invited to present a song and Amy was able to give a short presentation about the work of Rehoboth during a time of fellowship after the service.



Tinikling performance in Washington DC

VISIT TO WASHINGTON DC

Every Tuesday afternoon from 5.30-6.30pm we had a meeting with Kuya Tom and Ate Leah. In our meeting we studied about the climate and culture in Washington DC. We also studied about the flight and the feelings while we're in the air. Part of our preparations were getting a Barangay Clearance, Police Clearance, National Bureau of Investigation Clearance, a Passport and the last is a Visa. Before we took our passport we waited for a very long time, some of us took their passport very late. Our first performance of the Tinikling dance was when the US Ambassador to the Philippines, Mr. Harry K. Thomas came to visit us at Rehoboth on June 1. We did it even though we were all nervous. The second performance was in the Peace Corps Office in Manila on the day before we flew.

By John Carlo (1st Year College Forestry Student)

On June 28 we arrived at Washington airport, we were so excited because it was our very first time to travel, and thank God because we had no trouble in getting our travelling bags, and we checked in at the Key bridge Marriott Hotel. June 29 was our orientation at the National Mall. We met the different people in our assigned tent, the other peace corps volunteers and we discussed the festival program.

June 30 we left the hotel at 9.30am going to the National Mall. It was the beginning of the festival. We had a scheduled time for our dance, cooking and teaching games with the kids in the kid's corps tent. In one day we danced two times in one hour. We danced at 11.00-12.00 and 3.00-4.00. Before dancing we usually introduce ourselves and we have to also introduce the things that we do here at Rehoboth. When the dance was finished we invited people to try the dance. We were happy because they really wanted to try the dance. Even if it's tiring to teach the others because somebody will fall if they are trying to dance with the bamboo and we are afraid because we don't want to hit their feet! We are also assigned to cook Filipino dishes like 'adobong chicken', or pancit and turon and some people are also assigned at the kids corps tent and we all had fun teaching the kids Filipino games even though some of them are naughty. We are enjoying playing with them. We are doing this until July 11.



Filipino cooking

After the festival we were going to the different museums. We went to the Air and Space Museum, Natural History and American Indian Museum. On July 11 we visited the Washington Monument. When we arrived at the hotel we did our packing of our clothes because it was our last day and we needed to get back from where we were from but after that we had a big night party and at last we performed our tinikling dance there, we also watched the other countries with their bands, dances and songs.

We left the hotel at 8.30am and the flight time going back to the Philippines was 2.00pm. We left the hotel everyone was saying 'bye bye hotel, bye bye Washington, bye bye friends, bye bye National Mall, bye bye everything'. It was so sad and happy emotions that we have. We're happy because we've done the dance well and experienced living in Washington even if it's two weeks only. Sad because we have many friends that we have already met and I don't want to travel again because I don't want to suffer vomiting and headache! This trip was the most memorable experience that I have ever had.

By Shiena Joy (2nd Year College Agriculture Student)

One Filipino visitor to the festival truly appreciated the contribution that our group made and later emailed to say "I forever will cherish those moments you all brought us in that hot summer of 2011 here in Washington, DC, not only you brought us joy but pride to be pinoyos (Filipinos) too. Someday, God will remember us, specially those with golden hearts. Remember in Jesus time, when in one time when the children ran towards Jesus but the apostles tried to keep them away from Him? What did Jesus say? Let them be and let them come, for to go to heaven one must become one of them. Cherish the children, God will reward you all."

ECO-LEARNING FARM PROJECT UPDATE

RCHI staff and residents have created an inspiring and practical Eco-Learning Farm. Among the lush vegetable plots are ornamental plants, herbs, famous garden quotes, recycled product plant hangers, a fish pond, water catchment systems, plus creatively handmade stone pathways, bamboo fencing and shade huts. The innovative project has attracted many visitors including the U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines, Provincial Governor, Municipal Mayor, Tarlac College of Agriculture professors and curious neighborhood friends. Proud staff and residents toured the visitors and shared their accomplishments. The vision of the Eco-Learning Farm is to grow an eco-friendly, productive, and sustainable learning farm that offers a safe and unique environment for youth development programs plus a supply of fresh, organic produce for use in meals at the center.



Working in the garden

Since the 2500 square meter area was prepared for cultivation in 2009, the farm grew along with the learning opportunities. These included a deep-water well project, construction of shade huts and a support nursery, establishing a fish pond, a Farm to Fork cooking demonstration using fresh vegetables from the Eco-Learning Farm, picnics, environmental education and nutrition seminars, and consistent teamwork necessary for maintaining the group growing areas. The staff mobilized the youth to participate in projects which promoted the development of various skills.

Fresh, organic vegetables from the farm have been common ingredients in meals at the Home, too. RCHI social worker, Ella Agustin, writes, "I enjoy working with my group in beautifying and maintaining the farm. I am happy to see our plants grow and bear fruit for the home consumption. The activities and bounties help in keeping the residents healthy and strong."

In 2010, RCHI was able to harvest organic vegetables for use in meals at the Home three times a week during the August, Sept and October growing season. This saved RCHI money and empowered the youth who helped grow the vegetables. Shortly after the June 2011 growing season began, over 25 fruit and vegetables could be found growing on the farm.

RCHI has many plans for the future. Ella Agustin looks forward to, "developing the social aspects of our residents" through farm-based projects that foster literacy, public speaking, decision making, teamwork and leadership. Plans include the building of a large rain water catchment cistern, designing and installation of youth-friendly educational signs throughout the farm, a community outreach plant nursery and income generating projects using farm produce.

Leah Ferree, US Peace Corps Volunteer

VISITING SPONSORS

During the Easter holiday the children were excited to entertain a group of four visiting sponsors from the UK. We enjoyed some fun and games together, went swimming at a local resort, learned some new songs, and visited some of the homes of the children. One visit took us to Labney, a small village in the mountains where three of our residents come from. We had to hire a truck as the previous time we had attempted to go there in our vehicle we had to abandon the trip as we could not get up the steep, muddy mountain track! It was a bumpy, quite uncomfortable but very scenic ride including driving through the river to get there. We visited the families of the children, had lunch and went down for a dip in the river and if you were brave enough you could walk across the hanging rope bridge high up over the river. We also took a trip north to Benguet and Mountain Province (a very long, windy journey) to visit another two families. We stayed in a church and thoroughly enjoyed the hospitality of the people there and our visit – although it was much cooler than we were used to, the contrast in landscape and local life was amazing.



Off to the swimming resort

LEAVING REHOBOTH



I always imagine life if I was not in this Home (Rehoboth Children's Home, Inc). Maybe, studying in college would not have been possible for me to do when I am with my family. I was grateful to become a part of this Rehoboth family, God's family. I remember the day when my mother brought me here, her eyes were full of tears while she was leaving me. I didn't understand before what she was thinking about, all I knew was that I was here because they wanted me to finish my study. Every night I was crying and felt like my family didn't love me anymore. But, one day, I totally understood, I was here because God had a great plan for my life. Some day I would be able to help my family and Rehoboth as well, returning back the good things they have done for me.

In ten years at Rehoboth, I learned a lot of things. In here I found friends and I became more friendly, and knew how to deal with others. I was a leader in a group and became responsible, understanding, respectful and had self-discipline. I was helping with home activities and I became productive. I was part of the praise and worship team in the church, and because of that I got closer to God. But, the very happiest and best thing that I ever had was that I accepted Christ as my personal Saviour. Through Him I now understand why my mother brought me here in the first place. I always trust God for His promises and no more explanations are needed. Rehoboth is a blessing to me.

Now I am leaving Rehoboth to fulfil my dreams. I want to apply my profession and to be successful in God's glory. Yes, I know that life outside this Home is not easy and is full of challenges, but trusting God is the best thing that I can do. God bless Rehoboth! God bless Sponsors!

Jerome Soriano (BS Information Technology Graduate 2011)



FROM CONNIE

The week-end of 21 – 22 May, 2011 was very memorable. My birthday ceildh was a great success. It was wonderful to be able to thank, in that way, some of the people who help me, as a visually impaired person, to have a stimulating and enjoyable lifestyle and to carry out the work which God has graciously given me to do for Rehoboth. Many kindly marked the occasion by giving a donation to the charity instead of giving me presents and I am grateful to them for doing so. The AGM and the Rehoboth Evening Service at my home church the following day were also delightful occasions. I plan to speak in the Cardiff area in the future. The original suggestion for this came from a school girl and it has grown from there. If you feel inspired to suggest a group of people in your area who might like to hear about the work, please get in touch. The visit to the Isle of Wight is due to take place in January/February, 2012. **Connie Andrews, UK Rep**

If you would like to receive the newsletter or any of our other publications by email please send us your email address to info@rehobothchildrenshomes.org. A reminder to our sponsors - emailing your sponsored child helps keep our costs down and the letter gets there more quickly too! So if you are able, please consider sending a letter by email or word attachment. Thank you.

www.rehobothchildrenshomes.org

Email: info@rehobothchildrenshomes.org

Correspondence to: GBC Centre, East Chadley Lane, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 2BJ

UK Mobile No. 07530 104959

Tel 01480 52644 (Connie)