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EDITOR'S LITTLE NOTE

AKWAABA AND GREETINGS FROM GHANA! WELCOME TO FEBRUARY EDITION OF THE GATEWAY, THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR PROJECTS ABROAD GHANA!

WELCOME TO FEBRUARY IN GHANA.

THIS YEAR SAW THE DEPARTURE OF OLGA KOUSI, MY CO-DESK OFFICER FROM GHANA. SHE WILL STILL BE WITH PROJECTS ABROAD, BUT NOW WORKING AS AN ASSISTANT COUNTRY MANAGER IN SOUTH AFRICA. WE WILL REALLY MISS YOU HERE IN GHANA!

ALSO, SAMUEL POLLEY AND RAINBOW PLANCHE JOINED THE "GREAT" TEAM OF GHANA; AS JOURNALISM/ASSISTANT COUNTRY MANAGER AND SOCIAL MANAGER, RESPECTIVELY.

GUYS YOU ARE REALLY WELCOMED TO THE TEAM!

INSIDE OUT: GENERAL INFO ABOUT GHANA

HON. CHARLES BINEY ARRIVES IN CHICAGO FOR A MAJOR FUNDRAISER

Hon. Charles Biney moved to the US in 1979 and attended Manchester College in Indiana. After completing his bachelor's degree in Pre-Medicine and Biochemistry, Hon. Biney moved to Texas and enrolled at University of North Texas, where he completed a Master's degree in Biology with concentration in Molecular Biology and Genetic Engineering.

Later, Charles was made a deacon of the All Nations Charismatic Ministry in Dallas, and eventually was ordained a Minister of God. Hon. Biney has always been concerned about environmental pollution, and speaks against hazardous materials and gases. He is the president and CEO of Proedentek, an environmental consultancy outfit in Ghana.

In 1979, after the sterling exploits of the Peoples' Movement for Freedom and Justice, his path crossed that of Nana Akufo-Addo, a pro-democracy advocate who influenced Charles in no small measure.

In the early 1980's, Hon. Biney teamed up with Akyaba-Addae Sebo in the UK to fight against JJ Rawlings' brutality. Charles joined the Democratic Alliance of Ghana (DAG)

and linked up with Prof. Adu Boahen, Kwesi Pratt, and Akoto Ampaw and the leadership of the Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ).

In the late 1980's, Hon. Biney led night time pamphleteering and poster campaigns against PNDC and JJ Rawlings, and was eventually arrested and detained at the Central Police Station in Accra.

He worked tirelessly with subsequent pro-democracy movements until finally, under the able leadership of Nana Akufo Addo, the Alliance for Change was able to prosecute the struggle to its logical conclusion.

Hon. Biney continued to write and speak out against military dictatorship in Ghana, and has been an icon in the democratic dispensation in Ghana.

Hon. Biney believes he can make a change and has given up his lucrative career in USA to pursue the parliamentary seat of Ablekuma South (Dansoman, Mamprobi, Korle Bu, Chokor, Korle Gonno and Agege). If you are concerned about hazardous waste in Ghana support Charles!

If you are concerned about sanitation in Ghana support Charles!
Thinking about Sanitation, the World Bank says Ghana ranks at the bottom in Africa.

FROM: KOFI AMOABING, CHICAGO - IL.

FEATURE: HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH

READ & FEED – NEW READING OUTREACH PROGRAMME



Some of our volunteers have seen what a challenge it is to educate children, especially since illiteracy is such a big issue in Ghana. There is little room for improving outside of school, as most children do not even have the opportunity to own books. Our teaching and care coordinator, Jessica, decided to start an outreach programme that would serve as a regular source of practice for those who have the most difficulty reading. On Tuesday 8th February, 8 of our volunteers came to help Jessica in the 'Read & Feed' program in coordination with the Nana Afreamea Primary School.

The idea of the programme is a time where the children could come weekly to practise reading either individually or in groups of two. The food and drinks provide a break and relief to the children who have been a whole day in school, and allows them to come back ready to learn a bit more. The Nana Afreamea School was chosen since it had a library, so that books would be available to the children who could then build a healthy habit of reading independently from the volunteers.

The result was happy faces – from both volunteers and children. The volunteers have already understood how much of a difference they can make in a child's education and future. If you would like to participate, any phonic games or activities that could help the children learn are great tools that our volunteers could use. Otherwise, there are always more children's books needed – and not only at Nana Afreamea!



HOST FAMILY

MERCY OHENE



Mercy is a nurse at Tetteh Quarshie Memorial hospital as well as being a poultry farmer. She is a lovely woman who is looking forward to welcoming you into her home.

Mercy lives with her daughters, Dorothy (1990), Mariam (1976) and Lucy (1980), her nephew, Ebenezer (1987), and her two helpers, Jonathan (1992) and Bernice (1992). Her two eldest daughters live in Accra, but still visit occasionally. There are two other tenants living in the house with their children.

Mercy's house is in Akropong, close to a restaurant called Palm Hills, where volunteers' inductions always end.

The Akuapem Hills are at an elevation of 400m and hence have a slightly cooler climate than most of Southern Ghana.

Both Mamfe and Akropong have a post office, markets and a few bars and restaurants. There is much to see and do in the surrounding area including hiking, mountain biking and visiting waterfalls and bead markets.

Mercy hosts a maximum of four volunteers and a volunteer's room, which could be shared with another volunteer, will have two beds and space for clothes.

Meals will be a mixture of Ghanaian and western-style foods. The family is keen on serving Ghanaian dishes; however, appreciate the need for variety and that some people have particular tastes.

The family is used to volunteers going out in the evenings, and will be happy to take you to some local establishments. If you are out with other volunteers, the family likes to know where you are going and when you will be back.

PROJECT

ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (AYD)

AYD use sports as a tool for human and social development of young people. It contributes towards addressing gender inequality and assists with the development of life skills such as leadership, decision making, organisational and management skills among the children.

Sports act as an effective medium for conveying educational messages relating to health issues. In addition to that the children get a playful learning.

Apart from developing their talents in sports, young people use sports to address social issues such as HIV/AIDS (cost-effective medium and outreach tool for communication, Prevention and peer education on HIV/AIDS), Equity (Increased opportunities for girls/women, the disabled and other marginalised groups), Education (effective formal and non-formal education engagement and opportunities especially for girls and development of leadership skills) and Good Governance (medium to foster democracy, rule of law, fair play, respect and discipline).

The programme is based in 2 communities, Moree and Asebu. The programme starts at 3pm – 5pm each

day during the school hours and during vacation period; Training from 7am – 9am and the afternoon as well.

Every Friday is used to discuss social issues and Tuesdays has been dedicated to visit children and parents in their parent homes to check if the kids have any needs at home.

The programme also checks on the progress of the kids at school and also work with teachers to see how best the children can be helped academically.



The goal of AYD Programme is to develop sporting talents of children and also use sports towards addressing gender inequality and assists with the development of life skills such as leadership, decision making, organisational and management skills among the children.

DONATIONS

TWO DONATIONS BY VOLUNTEERS

This month, there have been donations from two volunteers at the Hills.



The first was by Rosie Mellor, who donated 1200 GHC to Mount Zion Foster Home which was made through food provisions and other expenses. Food included smoked fish, spaghetti, plantain, rice, and maize, salt and sugar, as well as Milo, milk and juice provisions. In addition, firewood was donated and the foster home's electricity bills paid.

These are some of the items donated worth 1 200 GHC:

- Plantains
- Rice
- Maize
- Firewood
- Electricity Bills
- Milo, Milk
- Biscuits, other foods
- Sugar & Salt
- Smoked Fish
- Spaghetti
- Tomatoes
- Drinks

The second donation was by Caroline Bratt, who gave 1800 GHC towards children's school fees and food costs in the Kwamoso area. At the Holy Hills School, 5 children were funded for one year; at the Ebenezer International School (which is also the current Projects Abroad building site in the Hills), 10 children were funded for 1 year. At the Kwamoso Presbyterian Primary School, 20 children could be funded over 2 years.

Caroline's 1 800 GHC went towards:

- 10 children's school fees and feeding for 1 year at Ebenezer Intl School
- 20 children's school fees & food for 2 years at Kwamoso Presbyterian Primary School
- 5 children fees & food for 1 year at the Holy Hills School



Thanks so much for these donations; they have made for long-lasting smiles!

MUURSCHILDING VOOR COVENANT DAY CARE CENTE

By Mathilde Hoefnagel en Marion Oomen



Als vrijwilligers zijn wij naar Ghana gekomen om daar de cultuur te leren kennen en iets voor de mensheid te doen. Onze manier was om via Projects Abroad te gaan. Het is een goede en veilige organisatie en tot nu toe hebben we er ook al heel veel plezier mee beleefd.

Het project dat wij gekregen hebben is bij Covenant Day Care Center. Het is een gezellige school met ongeveer 50 kinderen tussen de twee en zeven jaar. Wat wij daar doen is vooral les geven en activiteiten doen met de kinderen. Maar wij hebben ook nog iets anders extra's gedaan. Er kwam een vraag vanuit de school aan ons, of wij de muur wilde beschilderen. Wat wij natuurlijk met veel plezier wilde doen.



Als eerste zijn we begonnen met het brainstormen van wat er het beste op de muur moest komen. Samen met de leraren hebben wij overlegd en het besluit was snel genomen, het zou een jungle worden met dieren. Daarbij ook nog een aantal andere onderwerpen die handig zijn om aan de kinderen te leren, zoals een vlag, een krab, een hark, een bijl, een bal. Deze voorwerpen wilde de directrice van de school ook graag op de muur. En die hebben wij dan ook met plezier geschilderd.

Om te beginnen zijn we met de directrice en haar man

naar de winkel geweest voor verf. Een deel van de verf hebben wij gesponsord aan de school. Wij hebben in Nederland geld ingezameld met de derdejaars leerlingen van de opleiding SCW (Sociaal Cultureel Werker). Van dit geld wilde we iets doen voor de kinderen op de school en een muurschildering kwam ons heel erg goed uit.



Omdat een muurschildering iets is wat voor veel jaren blijft staan en kinderen, leraren en ouders er zo heel lang plezier aan kunnen beleven.

We hebben een onderlaag op de muur aangebracht, samen met een schilder die graag wilde komen helpen. Dat heeft een dag moeten drogen en de volgende dag zijn we verder gegaan met de tweede laag. Dat werd de achtergrond van de muur. Ook dat heeft weer een tijd moeten

drogen, maar wij zijn alvast met de buitenkant verder gegaan. Daar hebben wij de naam 'Covenant Day Care Center' op de muur geschilderd. De volgende dag zijn we begonnen met het tekenen van de figuren op de muur. Een van ons heeft dat afgemaakt en de ander is alvast gaan schilderen. Daarna hebben we alles samen afgeschilderd. We zijn er in totaal anderhalve week mee bezig geweest. Uiteindelijk staan er leuke dieren op de muur zoals een leeuw, koe, zebra, varken, en een schaap die tussen de palmbomen en het gras zitten, ook hangt er een spin en zijn web vormt het alfabet. De Ghanese vlag hangt uit en ook de Nederlandse vlag is op de muur geschilderd. Als dank van de bijdrage van de leerlingen van de opleiding Sociaal Cultureel Werker in Tilburg hebben we dat ook nog extra op de muur geschreven. Zodat iedereen kan zien, wie het gemaakt heeft, en aan wie we het te danken hebben.

Wij zijn heel erg tevreden en trots op het resultaat. En we weten zeker dat we er heel veel kinderen blij mee hebben gemaakt.

Groetjes,

Mathilde en Marion

GHANA'S FLAG, NATIONAL PLEDGE, ANTHEM, AND COAT OF ARMS

The National Flag



The flag of Ghana consists of red, gold and green horizontal stripes with a five pointed black star in the centre of the gold stripe. The color red represents the blood of those who died in the country's struggle for independence, gold stands for the mineral wealth, while green symbolizes the rich forest. The star represents the lone star of African freedom.

The National Pledge

I promise on my honour to be faithful and loyal to Ghana my motherland. I pledge myself to the service of Ghana with all my strength and with all my heart. I promise to hold in high esteem our heritage, won for us through the blood and toil of our fathers; and I pledge myself in all things to uphold and defend the good name of Ghana.

So help me God.

The National Anthem

God Bless our homeland Ghana,
And make our nation great and strong,
Bold to defend for ever the cause of
Freedom and of Right.
Fill our hearts with true humility
Make us cherish fearless honesty,
And help us to resist oppressor's rule

With all our will and might for
evermore.

(Repeat last two lines)

Ghana's Coat of Arms



The coat of arms of Ghana consists of a shield divided into four quarters by a green St. George's cross rimmed with gold. In the top left-hand quarter is a crossed linguist staff and ceremonial sword on a blue background, representing local administration. In the top right-hand quarter is an heraldic castle on an heraldic sea with a light blue background, representing national government. In the bottom two quarters are a cocoa tree and a mine shaft representing the wealth of the country. In the centre of the green St. George cross will be found a gold lion, representing the continued link between Ghana and the Commonwealth. Surmounting the shield is a black five pointed star rimmed with gold, representing the lone star of African freedom, and this star stands on the wreath to the colors red, gold and green which again stand on the top of the shield. Under the shield will be found the motto FREEDOM AND JUSTICE. The supporters of the coat of arms are two eagles, colored gold. Around each eagle's neck hangs a black star suspended from a ribbon of Ghana's colors.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Guys!

Don't forget to join our official Facebook Group for our entire placement Regions:

Hills: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2355118946>

Kumasi: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2330126047>

Ho: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=24364808701>

Cape Coast: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2450760029>

Accra: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2581495079>

PAHRO: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=113609401994015>

Country Blog: http://www.mytripblog.org/mod/blog/group_blogs.php?gl=true&group_guid=2915

Am sure you will meet some past, current and up coming volunteers there, to share ideas and tips!

Up coming Human Rights volunteers, please check out what's up on the PAHRO link.

It's time to NETWORK!!!

SOME IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Kotoka International Airport (Info. Desk)

Tel: 00233302776171

Police

Tel: 191

Fire Service

Tel: 192