

King's Children's Home Narrative Report 2006

This year 2006 began with our Annual New Year's party for the children. This is always very exciting for them. Everyone looks forward to this time together where we all get involved in playing games and other special events that have been planned. We had a couple from State College, Pennsylvania who spent the New Year with us.

We began this New Year with seven staff along with the Director and one volunteer, which brings us to nine people in all working at the home. We had forty eight children to deal with ranging from infant to eighteen years. This is a very wide spread of children but this is what makes up the King's Children Home. We find out that dealing with a wider age range of children helps them to deal with the differences in ages.

Over the past several years we have seen the home grow, thanks to our partners, local and international, who have faithfully served the home.

We want to extend our thanks to all of you who have partnered with us during this year. Our deepest appreciation and gratitude goes out to our International donors and contributors: Antioch International Church, Target Earth International, Roy and D'Aun Goble, The Word at Work, Family Care Network, Abundant Life Church, Glade Water Calvary Baptist Church, Robert Massaar, and St. Andrews Presbyterian Church and Edna Parnell with the Parnell's Brothers. We can always call on you when we need you. We always feel that others may feel left out because their names are not stated, and we do not want anyone to feel like we do not appreciate what you have done or are doing for us; to our National donors and contributors: Belize Mills Limited, US Embassy, and Elsie Alpuche and the International Women Club. If we did not call you out by name, it does not mean that you are not dear to us. You are considered a valuable part of the work here, whether you just stopped by to say hi, offered a prayer on behalf of the home, or brought us a word of encouragement. Whatever it is, you have all been a part of the work that is being done here at KCH.

We have met another milestone in the history of King's Children Home, twenty one years of caring for children and families of Belize. The Ministry of Human Development has changed the inspector for child care institution, and therefore the previous license assessment had to be revised, but everything was in place, and KCH met all their requirements and therefore was granted its license in December of 2006. **Praise the Lord!**

In May the Director's husband had a heart attack, and had to be taken back to the US. We also hit a financial low, but thanks to Rob Massaar who has always come forward, we were able to move on. Then in December we found ourselves in another fix and once more Rob and Family Care network were there for us. While in the US it was hard for the director to concentrate on her husband's illness, as the home weighed heavily on her mind as she knew the financial situation, and the fact that school was going to start soon. But thanks to The Word at work (Tim Tam) and the people from Lubbock, TX who partner in sponsoring the children and also Elsie Alpuche who works hard to help us with what we need and made it possible to pay all the school fees and getting the books and all the other things that the children need for the beginning of the school year. While in the US, the Director was also busy sewing uniforms to bring back to the Home. It is always hectic for our director as she tries to find ways of compensating for what we do not have. With the bills that also needed to be paid we found ourselves really praying to God for help, and praise the Lord He always comes through for us.

Preparation for the end of the school year begins in May and preparation for those graduating from the eighth grade. We had eight graduating from the eighth grade. And all eight El Shaddai Primary School graduates enter the Belmopan Baptist High School bringing our total number to fifteen in high school.

Our annual trip to the US with the children was cancelled because of the heart attack of the director's husband.

Upon the Director's return from the U.S preparation for the school year got under way. We were able to make our annual trip to Melchor, Guatemala to buy uniform pants and under pants and shirts for the boys. The school bags did not reach in time, so they had to use some of the old school bags.

During the summer we had a number of groups come over to just hang out with the kids. Some came out to drop off things like food, clothing, and medical supplies. Others felt that they just needed to come and encourage us that we're doing a good work.

This year we had a number of volunteers come and stay with us. Some stayed longer than others, but in all we were able to see how God works through all who will make themselves available for him.

With all the renovations finished on the home, there is a lot more to do as far as the upkeep. There seems to always be something to do around the home; bathroom leaks need to be fixed, window panes need to get changed, the fence needs repair work done, washing machines need fixing, you name it and it seems to be there.

A group came down from North Carolina and built much needed foot lockers for the children so they can lock up their personal items in them. They also brought locks for the lockers, but that proved to be a bit bothersome as the younger children could never remember their code and therefore those locks did not last too long.

Three of our children were returned to their homes, but one came back as it seems Social Services did not do all the needed work.. We also had three placements between November and December. One young lady stayed with us for about a week and we had her ready to start school the following Monday. However, she ran away that Sunday night. We were out looking for her until about 1:00 am but did not find her. Our other placement was a five month old baby boy that the mother was giving away. This baby is still at the home. Another is a thirteen year old who had been badly beaten by her parents. She is still at the home and is going to high school. All the other children are doing great.

We also had a staff turn over this year; two of our staff members quit and we had to hire two more. These two are working out pretty good; one for the laundry and one for the kitchen.

We had some new cupboards put up in the kitchen by The Word at Work. We were blessed also with two new commercial stoves and two microwaves, a blender, a chopper, and a couple of other things were all donated by the word at work.

In November, while the Director was in the US, she was privileged to visit the West Minister Presbyterian Church, and was able to get some much needed towels and sheets for the home as well as some other needed items for the children. Also, the group provided the funds for all of the children to do shopping for Christmas. The children had a ball shopping and picking out what they wanted. For Christmas we also were blessed with a group of people with another Word at Work group who came and helped us with cleaning in the home. Another couple and their two children from Ohio also came and spent the Christmas with us. Their church sent down Christmas gifts for all the children and also for all the staff.

We were also blessed by a Taiwan family who came and gave their house to the director, to be used for the children. We have since gotten three beds from the US embassy and the director put her personal things in it and it is now being used for volunteers and also to give the children a treat. We have since had slumber parties for the older girls, a weekend away for some of the others, and it is a good get away for any staff members that are tired.

As we look on the progress we cannot help but see a few set backs; one of which is our relationship with Belize Water Services (formally The Belize Water and Sewerage Authority). We were paying a flat rate no matter how much water we used, but when the

new company took over they stopped our flat rate and now we must pay for every gallon used. We have put together a water project for the home and are hoping that we can get some sponsors to build a water tank. This water would serve for the bathroom and the washing.

We have approached the company but to no avail. We are praying that God will move for us to be able to get this done.

We were also blessed with a small school bus for the home. This was needed very much as the van that we were using decided to quit on us. The bus was driven down from Canada by a group of people: Gwen Balder, Tim Deer, and a gentleman who was working down south. They used the bus for their mission work and when they were ready to return to Canada they dropped it off for us.

We know that we cannot say how much you all have helped us in the work here. Again, you may not be here in person, but whatever you have done for the home gaped the miles and brings us together, patterning together in the vineyard of the Lord.

Our objectives and our goal to provide the children with a clean and safe environment, give them an education, and a balanced meal was only accomplished with your help.

For all of you who have worked right along side of us: our Board of Directors, the staff that has given so much of themselves to care for the children that God placed here, WE THANK YOU.

Submitted by:

Leonie Herrera Gillham