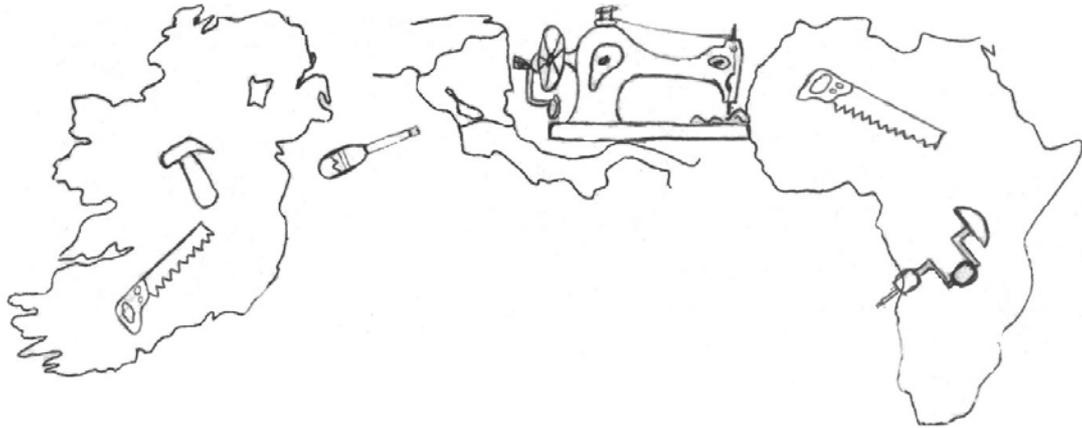




NEWSLETTER

of Tools For Solidarity

Give a new life to your old tools!



March 2009 **SOLIDARITY** NO.24
THE NEWSLETTER OF TOOLS FOR SOLIDARITY

Since the last newsletter which has been published a while ago many things have changed. However during the winter we found it is still freezing in the workshop. As previously mentioned in the last newsletter we have managed to set up a sewing machine centre in Tanzania, which is running very well in spite of some difficulties. Now we are investing our commitment and energy into the establishment of a new Tool center. Also in the last month the face of the organization has changed dramatically. First of all we would like to thank the past volunteers who contributed their time to the organisation and are the reason why we have archived so many of our aims

In the Spring of 2008 we said goodbye to another merry band of volunteers. They were Felix, our constant and steady line of Eirene volunteers, who kept TFS going through the long dark nights when only he and Flavia were here. Katharina and Freda who came for a few months and brought enthusiasm and work hard to collect and check sewing machines and Sarah for her time and contribution to making TFS work. A big thank you to all are previous volunteers and hope to see you in September.



NEW VOLUNTEERS

However we have many new volunteers. The first wave of volunteers arrived in the months of July to August 2009. Lorette, Mustafa and Philipp moved in 20 Newington street and filled the house for the first time in the last years. 4 Nations in peace and harmony under one roof, what a good example for our globalized world!

At the moment Lorette is our only female longterm volunteer. She is coming from France and has studied there „agricultural have to find out“. But in Tools she has found her real love: sewing machines! Also she is the driving force behind the sewing machine refurbishment and because of her huge commitment to the organization she can be sometimes called John the II. Fortunately Lorette has decided to stay with us for two more years and we couldn't think of a better person as a project coordinator.

Last year Tools got its first Turkish volunteer. His name is Mustafa and he is an electrical engineer from Kayseri (find out how his city is written). His work up to now has concentrated on sewing machine refurbishment working alongside Lorette, planning and working for the new tools project and the construction of a treadle design. Hopefully this prototype will be produced in Tanzania in the future. Beside his company we don't want to miss his great Turkish meals which bring a little spice as opposed to the normal fear of vegetarian sausages, potatoes and rice.

The new Eirene volunteer this year is Philipp from Germany who is in charge of treadles and with the responsibility of looking after the volunteers from the Sense program (working with people suffering from blindness) and also this newsletter.

At the beginning of this year the Tools family grew again and we were very happy to welcome Tim, Germain and the return of Ivan once again. Germain from Belgium will stay with us as an EVS for half a year and is also working along with Lorette in the sewing machine crew. Moreover he is engaged in the planning and realization of the supported volunteer program. (Ideas :Rice, swimming in the cold sea, Belgium beer...)

The upcoming new Tools project is primarily planned by Tim and John. Tim is doing his internship with us and studies as a Master degree "management of humanitarian organizations" in Paris. After some early difficulties in refurbishment of sewing machines, he is now capable to deal with 99K ! In addition the "Partner's information pack" which you can find on the blog is edited by him.

Three months ago Ivan came back and brought a lot of life into the Tools volunteer community. Moreover he trained Lorette and Mustafa on industrial sewing machines which will be of considerable importance during Lorette's forthcoming trip to Tanzania. At the beginning of April Ivan and Steven both returned to Tanzania to visit the sewing machine centre and train the newly appointed manager.

One of the volunteers who has worked nearly the longest time with us is Peter Atkinson, who helps us with the sorting out of tools. (need more text about him)

Unfortunately Heather, who had been a Volunteer with us for more than 2 years, and has been responsible for the sorting out of material, wool, attachments and many other items of haberdashery has recently left our organisation and moved on to new targets. We would like to thank her for her commitment and we will never forget her fabulous tasting home baked cookies and buns. Tea times will not be the same again!

Furthermore we would like to say thank to all the local volunteers who spend their time and energy for Tools. So Thank you, Dankeschön, Merci and Tessekkurler to Peter, Sheldom, Raymond ,Roger and Liam.

SENSE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Every Tuesday Paul and Dominick accompanied by two supervisors from the Sense Program of Carrickfergus, come to work with us. Since February when they started with the refurbishment of a complete Carpentry Kit. This includes tools like planes, squares and hammers. Moreover they give us a helping hand with sanding jobs like the restoration of treadle tops. We are very glad to have the chance to work with them together.

IMPRESSIONS OF A VISIT TO TFSR

After a long trip from Belfast to Southampton, it was great to see Jon at the bus stop who was there to take me to our „sister“ organization Tools for Self Reliance (TFSR) in Netley Marsh. After arriving to workshop, Jon made a small tour in workshop, introduced so many staff, that still I cannot even remember their names like always, and explained the work which they are doing at the moment. Then I met with Elio and Sylvia, who are from Italy and Peter from Germany and of course Prof. Orr (Bill), in the volunteer house which is so close to workshop (about 2 seconds☺). They were so kind and shared their house with me for 4 days. When we went back to workshop after meeting, there was a van waiting for Elio to unload. I thought this must be my destiny, in spite of his kind reject to my offer, I just did with him like I do always. It was a good feeling to see them with space problem which is our problem as well so I felt great because we are not alone☺.

My second day was all about electrical checking. Firstly I would like to thank Mr. Ken Young very much who shared his knowledge about electrical checking of domestic and industrial sewing machine motors and answered all my „interesting“ questions. In my third day the target was workshop and machinery information. I was so grateful about our BOSS John Wood who had wanted so many things in short time as usual. So that I did same information absorption on Jon who is also workshop manager in TFSR about machinery and requirements for our new tools project. He gave me so many information and some tutorials about machines. After lunch, I did a great meeting with Jan Kidd, the boss of TFSR. I am really thankful that she gave me incredible information about their partnership structure and her point of view about the organization.

In the end this visit was not only a great experience for me , but also very important in terms of sharing and exchanging knowledge and finally reinforce the relationship with our sister organization. Hopefully I didn“t really disturb them. Thanks for everything, TFSR, I hope our and your project will have many years ahead for helping the people living in those countries and need really help.

FOUR DAYS IN GARVALD EDINBURGH – TFSR WORKSHOP

Before to arrive in Edinburgh, I know nothing about Garvald Centre except they repair some sewing machine type Singer 99K.... So, it was for me a very nice surprised and a great experience. In Garvald, They are not only the friendly workshop where is refurbished the tools and sewing machine, but also a baker, a puppet workshop, a cantina, a woodcraft workshop... In Garvald, the ambience is very particular, very nice: quiet, friendly...

So for four days, I had the opportunity to work with Brian and John, the two great “refurisher” of sewing machine of the workshop. I had a lot of very nice moment and I look forward to come back in this very nice workshop and to see again all the person of the workshop.

UGANDA TRIP - 10 DAYS

In April of this year TFS was invited to participate in a conference in Uganda organised by Eirene. The conference was on partnerships and there were 12 local organisations represented, myself from TFS and officials from Eirene including Eirene volunteers on placement within Uganda itself.

The journey over was exhausting and at the airport, at Entebbe, I was greeted by John Alibankoa who would later facilitate my travel to visit several training colleges looking for support from TFS.

The conference itself was very interesting and gave me a different insight into the work and role of Eirene. It was also good to see so many groups working to tackle many of the social and community problems that exist in Uganda today. Their activities ranged from working with street children, orphans, mental and physical handicapped people to helping to rebuild schools and providing training in a range of skills. Although it was only 3 days there were some useful contacts and ideas to come out of the event. We hope to support one of the groups, at the conference, with some tools and other support and we also hope to work more closely with Eirene in the future.

After the conference I travelled with John Alibankoa to visit 10 Vocational Training Colleges VTC's and also a prison to look at how TFS might be able to assist. It was a lot of travelling and meetings and as usual very challenging. We have not worked in Uganda for 3 years and the country has changed quite a lot in that period. All colleges were looking for material support, such as tools and sewing machines. What was very apparent from many of the colleges was the poor state of disrepair of many of the sewing machines and some of the tools that they had. It also seemed that many of the students brought their own tools when they went to the colleges. While in the West of Uganda we visited URDT (Ugandan Rural Development Trust) partners of TFSR (Tools For Self Reliance) to see how the tool centre that was established there over 1 year ago is going. Time was not on our side but it was very interesting to see how it is working and I would have liked a lot more time there.

Unfortunately I have no pictures but we are in the middle of assessing how we can help and will let you know in the next newsletter.

DOWNPATRICK

March 2009 corresponded with the 5th birthday of the creation of our workshop in Downpatrick. To celebrate that, all involved volunteers were invited to a unforgettable gathering and a great party which finally went on in Belfast the whole night! It was an occasion to congratulate everybody for his daily work and also to thank to Stephen who makes the Downpatrick workshop to a very enjoyable place! Small reminder of how the workshop operates: From Monday till Wednesday, the workshop welcomes volunteers who sometimes need special attention to repair and renew old tools. For the moment these tools are sent to Tanzania(????). However our next project will be highly probable based as an cooperation with a vocational training college in Uganda , where the tools will provide young people the opportunity to learn new skills and be trained on the various professions.

Finally we would like to thank everyone once again for their commitment and their company which creates this unique positive and motivating spirit. I hope that we will be able to capture this spirit and that there will be many successful years ahead of us!

Pictures



ANNOUNCEMENTS

CELEBRATION OF 25 YEARS OF TOOLS

Celebration of 25 years of Tools

As you all got a mail from Nancy , you all know that Tools has this year its 25. Anniversary. The result of your votes is that the celebrations will be in September. However the exact date will be set at the meeting of the planning group in May. Of course we will get informed as soon as possible.

Basic shape:

Thursday night - quiz in Old Boys

Friday day - open day in workshop

Friday night - band and disco night !!!!

Saturday day - scavenger hunt, teams of four, chance to bond around Belfast, finishing at Old Boys for soup and sandwiches

Saturday night - we take over Old Boys for long night of socialising

Sunday day – Getting sober and Cave Hill

We are looking forward to see yous all again in September!!!

THE BLOG

Now Tools has entered the Web 2.0. After many discussions and the dedication of Tim we decided to create a blog which will be updated on a regular base. You will find news about our present work like the sewing machine project and future projects such as the “Partnerinformation pack” of the new tools project on it. Feel free to leave comments and ideas!

So this is the address of the blog:

<http://toolsforsolidarity.wordpress.com>





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