



The Liberty News

Our News and Information written by the Children, Staff

A Letter from the Director

Dear Liberty Friends and Supporters,

Wow how time has flown! We initially intended to produce a quarterly newsletter however with the days flying so fast it turned out to be bi annually. This has been a very busy but productive year. My goal for this letter is to give you an update and to tell you how our children are doing.

We started 2011 with 28 children. Four of our girls left for Barbados in June but came back in July. We just didn't find the right family for them. Five siblings were happily reunited with their mother after she worked very hard to get them home. We currently have 23 children living at Liberty. The children are "growing like weeds", they've blossomed into active, funny, happy, helpful, loving children. Most of them are doing well in school; in fact of the 21 children that are in school, only one child is repeating a grade; 16 of them are in the top ten of their class. Shannon, our eldest girl started high school in September and is on the Dean's List! By next year Zarina and Delroy will be in high school too!

Our children are very active in school and in our community. They attend church services regularly: five of our children received their first holy communion this year and two more asked to be baptized. This summer, we produced seven Sailors who completed a sailing summer camp and became competent sailors in the Optimist Dinghy. They have since been competing in regattas and bringing home medals and trophies! They are learning to give back to their community as they participate in community clean ups and other events.

Last summer, a Canadian Rotary Club along with students from St Catherine's Academy High School, spent ten days volunteering with us. They brought refurbished playground equipment and installed it on our grounds. The then president of the club, Lauren Emery, promised to come back this year and install a basketball court. Although the group was not able to return this year, Lauren, kept her word and raised the money, she then liaison with the local Rotary Club whose members came on board Liberty Campus several weekends and built the multipurpose court. This court is a favorite amongst all of the children who use it every day. With sailing, basketball, and playing on campus- these are many of the ways the children release their energies- we have realized a definite decrease in conflict and misbehavior.

Erica Gerity, an American who is now living in Belize, is a licensed therapist with proven experience working with children and families, is now volunteering her time to work with our children and staff.

Dr Cecilio Eck continues to provide free medical care of our children as needed and Dr Adrian Heusner provides us with free dental exams, cleaning, and extractions. This is a huge help financially! Our financial situation continues to be challenging as we continue to struggle to find funds to pay our utilities, staff, and other financial obligations.

In August, 2011, Liberty and the Government of Belize established a partnership which would benefit Liberty by GOB providing a monthly stipend, establishing a new board of directors which will be overseeing management and working to raise funds. We continue to receive essential funds from the Radisson Hotel and Kelly and Mukul Kanabar of San Pedro; International Women's Club, and Brodies Supermarket and are very appreciative of their vital support.

We continue to work our vegetable gardens, greenhouse, raise pigs, and chickens. With the help of BNE and students from Seattle University, we completed the first phase of our water reclamations project which collects water from the laundry room and gravity feeds it into the gardens and greenhouse. We also use the reclaimed water to wash down the pig pens. Recently, the Belize Insurance Association did a food drive for us and the good folks in San Pedro under the guide of Peter Lawrence and Diane Campbell are organizing a fundraising drive on December 17th with the hopes of raising enough money to pay our utilities for three months.

I'd like to end by saying a big thank you to each and every one of you who continue to support us. We have a lot to be thankful for even as we ask for your continued support. I wish you all a joyous holiday season and the best the New Year has to bring.

Much Hugs!!

Delfena Mitchell

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October 24, 2011

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Pre-Easter Proclamation Fund Raiser

Ms. Birdie Francis, host of A Word from the Lord, and a very generous donor of Liberty, who took time out of her busy schedule to come and teach our kids etiquette and table manners, on April 8th 2011 decided to yet again show her generosity by getting together with NICH to plan a fundraising show at the Bliss Center where all proceeds go to Liberty.

The show was entitled "The 7 last words of Christ", there were a very large number of Belizean Pastors that participated in lifting spirits and rejuvenating souls.

There were praise teams, Liturgical dancers and singers that thoroughly entertained everyone. When the show was over I spoke to a few of the attendees, and everyone said to me that what they've just experienced was beyond their expectations,

the dances were magical, the singing heartfelt and the sermons did exactly what they were promised, it rejuvenated. And so we here at Liberty would like to take this time to thank everyone that participated in making this Show a success.

Thank you!!

A WORD FROM THE LORD TV MINISTRIES
 In Conjunction with
NICH
A Pre-Easter Proclamation
The 7 Last Words of Christ
 Proceeds to benefit Liberty Children's Home
 Come out and Lift your Spirits,
 Rejuvenate your souls.
WORD PRESENTATION BY BELIZEAN PASTORS
ALL DENOMINATIONS
 Praise Teams Liturgical Dancers Singers
 Friday April 8th, 2011 @ 7:30 pm.
THE BLISS CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS





"Helping Out"

Around here there is always something to do, the kids do help clean the campus and their dorms on weekends and sometimes even during the week but whenever we have new arrivals (piglets) the little onsite farm we have is the place to be.

Often times it would take an entire day for one mother to deliver all her piglets, the kids never gets tired of watching them come out one after the other.

They love to help Mr. Tillett or Mr. Angel get them clean and place them next to their mom so they can begin



feeding from her, I've witness the birth of piglets here at Liberty and it was absolutely enchanting.

Some kids you will find in the garden, they love to assist Mr. Angel to dig the soil and plant the seedlings, some of them you will find in the kitchen helping



the cooks, and on some days you can find a few in the office helping to stock books on shelves, sweeping or even sitting quietly in the conference room drawing or coloring.

"Liberty Kids Victorious" In Optimist Sailing Competition.

Last Newsletter we told you about our kids participating in the training for the "Optimist Project" introduced by the Belize Sailing Association.

During the summer every Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, Delroy, Rupert, Lori, Shannon, Zarina, Tyrell and Jaden were taken to their sailing lessons, which thoroughly paid off.

On 10th September the Battle of St. George's Caye Regatta was held, coming as no surprise to us, because of how hard we've seen them worked, our kids scored a number of medals.



Two 1st place Optimist, one 2nd place Optimist, one 1st place Bosun, one runner-up Bosun and a surprising upset, winning a very large trophy for first place in the entire competition (his age group) was Tyrell. "GO LIBERTY"

We look forward to bringing home even more trophies come November in San Pedro for the International competition.

Cancer Walk.

In April of this year the Belize Cancer Society organized another cancer walk.

Ms. Delfena, being a long time participant of cancer walks throughout the years, was all geared up and ready to go, and after having no misbehaving from Brittany, she decided to allow her to accompany her on which might turn out to be a life changing experience for little Brittany.

The walk was scheduled to begin at 5 a.m. from the Ladyville and would end in Belize City. Ms. Delfena explained to Brittany that she needs to be ready by 4 a.m.

Come Sunday morning Brittany was the first child up, took her bath and assisted the cook to prepare an early breakfast for her, she was so focused in her preparations, and she was able to meet Ms. Delfena at the gate.

She explained to me how good this experience was for her, "It was hard, but I never complained, I was not doing it for myself, but for everyone that has been affected in some way by this disease".



"Graduations"

At the end of the past school year we had two graduations to prepare for, Shannon and her youngest brother Asher.

Shannon Graduated from the Roman Catholic School, all the kids attended the ceremony, which was short and sweet, there were lots of singing and dancing, thank you speeches, words of encouragement awards given for outstanding students and teachers and most importantly the handing out of the certificates.

The graduated wore uniforms, but everyone looked spectacular, and ready to take on the world. Shannon is now attending the Ladyville Technical School.

Asher graduated from the Liberty Learning Center, his graduation was simpler, Ms. Delfena attended with his brothers (Jaden & Abner) and sisters (Shannon & Lori).

This was also a short ceremony. Parents were thanked for their continued support towards their child's education;

teachers were praised for their determination and most importantly, graduates felt loved and encouraged with all their families and friends supporting them.



"Liberty Children's Corner"

Community Service

The Community of Ladyville has been extremely generous and accepting of our presence here these past six years.

So in the spirit of teaching the kids to give back, we selected a common area that is enjoyed by every individual in this community, "the Beach".

All the kids enjoy going to the beach on weekends with their caregivers, they can meet with friends, have a picnic, build sand castles and most of all swim.

At the beginning of summer, knowing that this is the time when the beach is most used, we decided to make several trips to the beach on a cleaning campaign.

The older kids were taken in groups of 4 with cleaning supplies, and for 3 hours we would clean the leaves, papers, plastics, glass bottles grass etc, we even build a bench with the bush sticks from the trees growing there.

Knowing that we were making the beach safe for the community to enjoy was a reward in itself.



"Back To School"

On September 5th the new school year begun, during the summer there were a lot of changes done here at Liberty, but one change that will benefit the kids here the most is the new Library.

There's more books, computer with internet, It's more comfortable and secluded where the kids can study and do homework in peace and quiet.

Most of the kids are eager to get back to school, a few of

them however are not so excited to let go of the summer.

Their summer was filled with trips, parties, birthday celebrations, lots of visits and more.

When asked what was the best part of returning to school many said: seeing their old friends and making new ones, going into a different class, learning new things, one girl even say being one step closer to graduating.

So you see, even though to some of them school may

seem boring at times, they know where they want to be in 10 years and what they have to do the get there, which is a recipe for success.



"Wikiki Beach" Hat Competition.

In May of this year was the Queen of England's Birthday (Commonwealth Day), as a result we decided to have a hat competition here at Liberty.

Each of the kids and some of the staff made hats, although some kids got assistance from other staff members.

That following weekend everyone was invited to the Wikiki Beach for the competition,

Taking Trips:

all the staff, their kids and even some of the parents from the pre-school were invited to the Beach.

Most of the kids were shy and did not want to model their hats, but a few did and won prizes. First prize in kids' category went to Tyrell, second prize went to Shannon, Mr. Mitchell won in the adult competition and Ms. Tasneem (a parent from the school) took second place.



"Bacab" Kid's Day Out.

During the summer there were a lot of exciting trips planned for the kids, one place they always loved going was the Bacab Eco Park.

This trip was organized by one of our long time supporters, Ms. Lindsey from the U.K. She came with a group and took the kids along with staff members to the Park.

This was a trip thoroughly enjoyed by all, complete with chips and dip, juices, endless water fun, horseback riding, and a visit to the butterfly sanctuary.

A day or two later all the boys were taken to the Belize Zoo for a day of adventure and learning of the animals that resides there. All in all this summer was one that will never be forgotten.



"Maruba" A Day of Beauty and Relaxation.

Women work so hard that we rarely remember to relax, so in teaching the older girls of Liberty how to take care of their bodies, one of the most important things they could learn is how to relax, take a break, or as some people would say take time to smell the roses.

Ms. Lindsey also saw the need to give the girls a day for

themselves, just as the boys, and she incorporated into the summer of fun another trip, this was a trip to the Maruba Resort and Spa.

The older girls were accompanied by their caregiver, and they recently told me what they mostly enjoyed on this trip. The facials, pedicures, mud baths, nature walks etc. But the scenery was so Beautiful, it made one forget everything to become totally and

totally and blissfully happy to just be.



"The LIBERTY We Love"

These are the words of some of the Staff of the Liberty Children's Home, who have stuck with us through thick and thin, good times and bad. We will never be able to repay them for what they've done for the Kids here, but hope they know that the success these kids will have in life, Will be as a result of their LOYALTY and LOVE. Thank you All!!

I can vividly remember in August 2005, when Liberty opened its doors to the first set of kids "the Garnett's" a family of 5 kids. That number has significantly increased over the years, fortunately, Liberty have closed the chapter for some of our children, by finding foster homes or reuniting them with their biological parents.

Ms. Delfena Mitchell is currently managing the affairs of Liberty, with a team of dedicated staff and constant donors we always seem to come out on top of any bad situation.

During the bountiful years there were some things we hold close to our hearts, so much so that even in the troublesome times we remain dedicated and devoted to our children, who are and will always be our first priority, we've enjoyed the good, so why not endure the bad.

Liberty is still facing and meets the challenges of the recession, when the going gets tough, the tough gets going.

Although we're not safely out of the woods, and we're still navigating rough seas,

along with relatively short period of calmness that sets in, I'm sure we're going to weather the storm.

Liberty will continue to sail these rough waters for as long as it can, as its captain Mrs. Mitchell guides the ship and crew into calmer waters.

Always an uphill battle, but we will continue to do our utmost in making Liberty the safest and most enjoyable place for our kids. When visitors walk through the big gates, they must have an experience they will never forget. LIBERTY FOREVER!!

Debbie Robertson

In 2007 I arrived on this beautiful campus, known as the Liberty Children's Home, greeted personally by the most outgoing and wonderful kids, who made me feel like I was already a part of this family.

During my years here a loving group of caregivers, cooks, teachers, securities, gardener etc joined together to create a cemented family bond to successfully pull through any crisis.

This unbreakable bond is what we rely on whenever we have hurdles to cross, and through skillful management and lots of prayers we make it through, most times unchanged.

In the meantime we've also experienced lots of changes and development at Liberty. I personally enjoyed working with the babies and toddlers, small kids, big minds.

I've watched as lots of them are reunited with family or adopted by new ones, which is a happy and at the same a sad occasion. In my opinion, Liberty is blessed, and we accept and appreciate all the good people that continue to hold us up

We look forward to better improvements every day, because our children are our future and we will continue to give love and be patient in the face of the storms ahead, knowing that whenever we feel like we are unable to go on, God carries us the rest of the way.

Tashira Gillett



"Liberty Learning Center"

"Food for Love" Drive.

Liberty Preschool is dedicated to providing an enriching, challenging and educational environment where each child is encouraged to grow to his/her fullest potential; academically, emotionally, and socially.

In helping the children to take this sort of teaching into the community we started a food drive. Each child brought 1 pound of food (canned or raw). Because we believe that it's through the dynamic partnership of child, parents and teachers combined with the unique blend of the Montessori and Reggio Emilia approaches, a love of learning will be developed whilst forming the whole child.

At the end of the week teachers, children and parents went out into the community to find the elderly, the widows and the single parents to share with them what we've gathered and extend our blanket of love around them.

The kids talked to and interacted with the elderly, their reaction was surprising to many of the adults there.

We know that that day the lesson they learned could not have been taught in a classroom and this renewed our drive to ensure the health and happiness of every child in our care.



"Festival of Arts"

This year's Festival of Arts we participated in the creative Modern Dance and Arts categories.

Our dances were choreographed by a parent of one of our students, Mr. M'wafrica Haynes, he chose a gospel 'I'm trading my sorrows' and a 'no more crime in Belize', he also designed the costumes, the kids did great. In the Arts category we had paper mosaic and kids creative arts.

The Liberty pre-school costumes were praised, the dance 'no more crime in Belize' was met with rave reviews, everyone loved it. The kids were energetic but disciplined and the overwhelming support from parents for their kids was a great reward for all their hard work, pre-school unit was the largest group of all.

Next year I can say will be even better than this year, we will have more Arts and dances and may even try to participate in more categories, come out and support our future generation.



Volunteers Testimonial Corner "Experiencing Liberty"

My Experience in Belize.

Jane Li

My stay at the Liberty Children's Home has been a very delightful experience. Since my arrival I have received many warm welcomes from the children and the staffs. The children have kept inviting me to sit at their table for every meal, and the staffs have willingly and patiently answered every question that I have asked. Several staffs have even treated me as part of their family. I felt greatly appreciative for their friendliness and helpfulness.

Staying at Liberty at the weekends and being an afterschool homework helper on weekdays have provided opportunities for me to interact with

the children on a frequent basis. As there are many children living at Liberty, getting to know about each and every one was, at first, a quite challenging task. However, thanks to their approachable nature, rapport has started to build up in no time. Observing how and what the children play (e.g., blowing bubbles, climbing trees), learn (e.g., counting, spelling), talk and act (e.g., "Nah nah nah nah nah! You cannot catch me...") have at times brought back memories of my childhood. The hot and humid Belizean weather, as well as the omnipresent mosquitoes, has also been a reminiscence of my city of residence past. Throughout the interactions with the children, I found that their virtually endless energy and guileless frankness were something that I very, very much (if

not most) adored for- something that I, as a grownup now, could no longer see as much in adults as in children. These couples of weeks have overall been very valuable to me; not only have I been helping the children and staffs, but the people and surroundings here in Belize have also helped me feel at home and like a young child again.



Experiencing Liberty!

Sally Kendrick

Of all the memories I will have when I return home after my time at Liberty, I believe those I will treasure most will be the conversations I have had with the children here. After lengthy discussion, Shenelle and I have decided the attributes essential to the nature of a princess (kindness and excellent table manners, primarily); Shannon has enlightened me concerning Liberty's traditions and habits; and Asher and I have talked about what it means to be a friend. Tyrell is fascinated by time zones, and the two of us have discussed metaphysics more

often that I can say. "The time zones all come from England?" he asked me. "They must have a really big time factory there!"

At times the children have made me laugh, at times they have touched me with their kindness, and at times they have surprised me with their ready understanding and even wisdom. As I prepared to come to Liberty, I thought about what I might be able to do to help the children, and about what I could bring to them that they would enjoy. It hardly occurred to me then, though it seems so clear now, that the most valuable part of my time here, both for myself and

the children at Liberty, would be the time we spend simply enjoying each others' company.





Liberty Fun !!

