

Ecologia Youth Trust Annual Report – 2010

This was a busy year at Ecologia Youth Trust with three flourishing projects on the go. With an active team in our office in Scotland and enthusiastic project champions in the field we accomplished a great deal. At our Annual General Meeting, our trustees and staff enjoyed fascinating presentations by key members of each project.

Thailand: Project manager, Ame Janchum visited us for the first time and gave a moving account of her personal experiences supporting the migrant workers and their families living in the Pang Nga and Ranong provinces of southern Thailand. Not only is the project making an impact in human rights on local and national levels but also on a personal level. Ame described how she is sometimes called out at night to support unfairly arrested migrants and stands up to the authorities concerned with her small son on her hip, determined to reach a fair outcome. Invariably she succeeds. Ame and Jane Rasbash were invited to give a paper at the Human Rights and the Environment Symposium at the University of the West of England, Bristol which was very well received. The success of this project goes way beyond the goals set out in our grant application due to the dedication of our partners, Sathirakoses Nagapradipa Foundation. The Big Lottery funded project comes to a close in January 2011. During Ame's visit we worked hard to prepare a new funding proposal to DFID, the UK Development Agency to take the project to the next level. The result will be announced early next year.

Georgia: Madge Bray described her personal drive to support the severely injured Georgian boy, Datuna, who, after two visits to Edinburgh Sick Children's Hospital is finally due to have a life-saving operation next year. Madge is passionate about the healing power of Georgian song and with Datuna introduced it to Thornlie School in Lanarkshire. The impact on the Scottish children of one small boy, so optimistic and engaged with life in spite of terrible disabilities, has been immense. The children have taken to singing Georgian music like ducks to water and raised the money to pay for a wheelchair access ramp for Datuna at Temi. One boy from a very poor home commented that he feels rich now, and very fortunate in comparison with Datuna.

Kitezh-Orion: David Dean, back from his annual consultancy visit to Kitezh and Orion gave a positive review of the changes he has seen there since his previous visit. It is remarkable how much has been achieved in both communities in this past year.

Perhaps the greatest achievement at Kitezh on a physical level was the installation of gas boilers in every house thanks to the generosity of our donors, Red Mountain Energy Corporation and others, and the local authority. Instant hot

water and heating without carrying coal and shovelling ash has freed the members to concentrate on their real mission—their work with children.

There are six new foster children in Kitezh, four of whom are energetic pre-schoolers calling for the reestablishment of Tamara Pichugina's Kindergarten which has its own beautifully equipped house. Orion completed one more family house and four new children are settling in to their new homes. They are all eagerly awaiting Godparents through Ecologia's Adopt a Godchild programme.

Our student group has grown as four young people left Kitezh to study in Moscow and Kaluga. We are grateful to Baker Botts Moscow for their continued support for the students' higher education. Vasily Burdin enjoys his work experience with Baker Botts as he prepares for a legal career and Valentina Kanukhina is in her final year at university preparing for a career in journalism and interpreting.

Both communities are moving forward with food production in their determination to become more self-reliant. The farm at Kitezh with goats, calves, chickens and turkeys is in the good care of a new family, Irina and Roma and their two-year old daughter, Grata. They provide wonderful fresh goat's milk and cheese. At Orion, the goats and chickens provide milk and eggs and next year they will expand the goat herd and introduce sheep.

Volunteers have become an essential part of community life and the excellence of the children's English is testament to their contribution under the tutelage of Andrew Aikman, who is now officially a member of staff in Kitezh School. This will be his fifth year there and we hope he will be there forever! We continue to review the Volunteers Programme to make it enjoyable and valuable to volunteers and community alike. The Russian Language Course is growing in quality and more students are becoming interested in improving their language skills.

The recession, however, has taken its toll on us as with many small charities across the country. Core funding for Ecologia's office and staff is an ongoing challenge. When faced with the choice to expand or contract, we unanimously agreed that expansion is the only way forward. So in the coming year we are committed to investing in our future with a new, more visible website, increase the number of volunteers and to succeed with the new projects described overleaf. We appreciate our supporters very much, and hope we can count on your continued backing to achieve these ambitious goals.

Liza Hollingshead



Tamara's kindergarten



Grata & friend

Upcoming Projects

Kitezh Community Education Centre

The Education Centre will provide an indoor gym, a theatre with dressing rooms, lighting and sound systems. There will be a dedicated well-equipped science room, an English classroom and enough space for up to a hundred children to attend the school. The centre will fully enable Kitezh to hold seminars, provide family therapy training programmes for parents and children, increase the quality of therapeutic educational work, attract new foster families and increase the number of children living in Kitezh. Cost: approximately £400,000 over three years.

Kitezh Community Education Centre

development

education

therapy

support

creative work

laboratory 30 sq.m.

classroom 23 sq.m.

classroom 23 sq.m.

classroom 23 sq.m.

classroom 23 sq.m.

classroom 23 sq.m.

office 23 sq.m.

entrance hall checkroom 44 sq.m.

sanitary 5 sq.m.

storeroom 3 sq.m.

boiler-room 22 sq.m.

WC 3 sq.m.

WC 3 sq.m.

equipment room 17 sq.m.

make-up room 23 sq.m.

dressing and staff hall 80 sq.m.

Amphitheatre general meetings place 64 sq.m.

Total area of Kitezh Community Centre
ground floor – 500 sq.m.
first floor – 150 sq.m.

Babushka Tamara's house: To celebrate the 60th birthday of Tamara Pichugina, foster mother extraordinaire and acknowledge her contribution to Kitezh, a small house will be built with space for her many children to visit her. Building is planned for 2012. Cost £20,000.

Two-Family House at Orion: To keep pace with the increasing number of foster families wishing to join Orion, they are building one more house for two families this year. The logs are there, and, funds permitting, the house will be completed in 2011. Cost £30,000.

For the school:

Science laboratory equipment	£3,000
Interactive Projector	£1,000

Bakery & cheese making equipment: A special dairy and bakery will be built onto the existing communal kitchen at Kitezh. In the meantime, a large oven and food mixer is needed. Cost £2,000

Respite Holidays for children: To send forty children on a summer holiday by the seaside. Cost £3,000.

Winter food storage: A root cellar to store vegetables over the winter. Because of the low water table they need information on how to build this to keep the temperature right.

Travel abroad, training and youth exchanges:

The 2009 Youth Exchange between Kitezh and Scotland raised the awareness of the value of travelling abroad to broaden the minds of both adults and children at Kitezh. We are planning:

A school exchange to offer foreign teenagers the opportunity to take part in the Summer Camp Role Game or make a historical journey to the Golden Ring and in exchange host the young Kitezhans in their own country. We are keen to find a school that is interested in developing a new exchange programme.

Roman Simukov will participate in the Ecovillage Training at Findhorn in February 2011. Cost £1,500

Volunteering Abroad: Sergey Shibaev seeks a three-month work exchange position abroad. He can contribute his IT, building and farming skills and will be a wonderful guest. £500 for travel costs.