

BARNHEM MUANG MAI

Tuesday 13th of May - Sunday 15th of June



Big Buddha, Phuket.

It is almost a month since our latest letter. But it's not because nothing has happened – the opposite. So much has happened both here and in Sweden so it is hard to know where to begin, so we think we begin backwards.

Last Saturday we got a very longed-for phone call from Lars Fryklund and Odd Fellow telling us that Odd Fellow now has decided to continue supporting Barnhem financially the coming four years. This is something fantastic for the children and Barnhem. Now we know that we have a more stable ground to stand on for the future.

Thanks to all you fantastic people in Odd Fellow.

The same day “our” Ulla came back for her second period as volunteer for us. The last time she was here she had asked for three months leave of absence from her job working with children in Sweden and this time she comes to work for us during her vacation.

We don't know what to say, we are so incredibly fortunate having the possibility to meet and work with all these amazing people being our volunteers. Just imagine hav-

ing the possibility to meet so many big, caring hearts - and we don't have to imagine!

And Ulla didn't come empty-handed; she brought a video from the concert held at Palladium in Malmoe on Monday the 26th of May.

It will be a great joy to watch the concert together with the children. The concert got 5 out of 5 by Jan Olsson at the newspaper Skånska Dagbladet.

The concert was arranged by the Happy Child Foundation and the brains and the driving force behind this initiative was my aunt Eva – now with the new nickname Superwoman! That fact that she was able to make all this happened besides her full-time job is a feat. It isn't just one thing to think about and take care of when you arrange a concert, especially when everything must be done without any costs. So if I was bragging about my aunt Eva before it is nothing compared to how I brag about her for all and everyone now.

And then all these wonderful musicians – if we have understood Eva - the easiest part was to find musicians that wanted to contribute to this concert. And contribute they did... ..okay it is time for us to admit that we couldn't wait to watch the concert together with the children but had our own sneak preview at home the same day as we got the video – and yes we have to agree with the journalist at Skånska Dagbladet it was a wonderful concert filled with fantastic music and a lot of human warmth.

This newsletter is starting to sound like a tribute to mankind and it's perfectly ok! Nowadays you read about misery and evil in the newspaper almost every day...but look our way, see what we get the chance to experience over and over again.

All these fantastic people that we have around us, that are helping us so unselfishly so we can continue helping our children. We are the fortunate ones!

Now you might be starting to wonder if nothing at all has happened at Barnhem, but yes of course it has – a lot.

We lost, within a week, Agnes, Åsa, Tina, Michael and Henrik as it was time for some of them to fly back to Sweden and for some of them to travel around for a while. It was a very strong quintet and we miss them a lot.

Lucky for us, Frida didn't leave us and all of a sudden she was the only "old" volunteer left. The only one that could take care of, and introduce, our two new volunteers Jenny and Karin, but of course Frida did it perfectly.

They are of the right stuff, our volunteers, tough and intrepid. So even if Jenny and Karin still are "new-comers" they already act like veterans and now they are reinforced with a real veteran in Ulla.

Kae has changed school to a boarding school in Kamala. It is a special school for chil-

dren with problems behaving.

It might not sound that positive, but for Kae and his siblings it is. He has had problems adjusting to school for a very long time, and has misbehaved, been fighting in school and so on. It was time for him to change school and he wouldn't have had a chance in an ordinary school.

This school is perfect for him. For one, he gets away from home, which is good, as he has stopped listening to his mother a long time ago. He will live in an environment where more will be asked of him and with more rules and days that are structured in a way we can't offer him here. And maybe the most important of all - school and "home" is the same which means that what happens in school is the same that happens at "home". But of course his real home will still be with us and he will come home to us one weekend a month.

But to be honest it wasn't a happy boy that left us. In his fear for all this new he became angry, sad and aggressive...BUT after only two weeks (including one attempted escape) he called home to Wow and it was a completely different boy that called her, he was polite and sounded happy and satisfied when he told Wow that he now liked his new school.

He came home to us for the first time this weekend and it was great to meet this calm and a little bit more secure boy. Hope this will work out well for him.

Nut, everyone's little favourite, has moved home to his father for a test period.

His mother didn't cope with taking care of him any longer and started to sneak out in the nights to go partying - this is months after Nut's father had left her for another woman.

Of course we could understand her feelings but in the end we had to try to see to the best for Nut and after having tried so many times to talk her out of this and she didn't listen but left him once again with one of the teenage-girls, 20 bath and the force to lie for us to cover for her we had to make it stop. Wow called Nut's father and asked him if he could take care of Nut, which he could and Nut's mother had to move out.

But we didn't leave it at that, Tae helped the mother to get a job at a friend's restaurant in Phuket Town, this was good in many ways. We could keep contact with her and make sure she was doing fine and in the end make sure that Nut wouldn't lose his mother.

But nothing lasts forever and this didn't last very long at all. Last weekend she didn't show up to work because she had left with a man, she didn't tell Tae's friend anything, she just disappeared. So now it's just to start all over again as we have to try to help her to take care of her life and start acting like the adult mother she is. All this to make sure that Nut will get his mother back even if he for the moment is having a

good time living with his father. This is made sure as Wow is having weekly contact with Nut and his father and by visiting them.

Otherwise most things are just as they should be.

As we told you before a lot of our children have moved to new schools as they have become too old for their former schools. Three of our teenage girls are out on work practice at hotels this semester and this has made them grown in to little ladies. Everyday three little tired ladies come back from a hard days work at the hotels. They are doing their work practice five days a week and are going in school one day a week.

Their work starts at eight o'clock in the morning and ends at six o'clock in the evening so it's many long days for them every week. Their work practice have made them understand the importance of mastering the English language so now it's them coming to us wanting to practice speaking English instead of the other way around.

Next weekend we will be celebrating Midsummer, the planning will start tomorrow... ..but to be honest, when it comes to party and having fun, our Thai friends are pro's so it will be them taking care of most of the planning even though Midsummer is a special Swedish tradition.

Our Thai staff have been planning and celebrating this particular festivity with us three times and already after the first time they did a much better job than us celebrating it.

Happy Midsummer!

Sussi och Hans



John and Kerry Grapendaal from Australia came to visit us with a car full with great things.



Frida och Jenny on their way to visit Big Buddha.



Gae pays her respect to Big Buddha



Hans and Fame "are" at Big Buddha.



Beo och Nino, two really good friends.



Playing with sand is fun.



Two friends with stripes, Ort and Bonn.



Gip is sending a heart to all kind people.