



On day two of the music and art camp we made paper masks with the older children.

2012 report

MUSIC AND ART CAMP

“Children Learn to talk by experimenting and listening; they can learn to make music by experimenting and listening - unless we stop them!

Place children in surroundings that are full of invitations to learn, provide them with encouragement and sympathetic attitudes from adults, as well as knowledge, and amazing things can happen-especially to the sensory perceptions that are central to the arts....do we have the courage to embark with them on what are frequently unknown seas?”

-Emma D. Sheely

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January 2012 marks the 6th year that Denise Pelley and I travelled to Gordhim, South Sudan, along with several other CASS (Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan)volunteers.

This year we had the help of two 17 year old Canadians, Haily Orser and Allison Whiting, who are both from London Ontario.

CASS also hired 7 Sudanese translators, 3 young women and 4 young men.

When we arrived on the first day of camp the Sudanese children were already sitting under the huge mahogany tree and singing some of their favourite songs. The children really love to sing the songs Denise had taught them in previous camps and are always eager to learn new ones. They also like to teach Denise some of their favourite Dinka songs.

This year, our translators had a much better

organized and run is important since they have many roles and help us in different ways during the two hours we hold camp. They need to be familiar with the camp structure and what it is we are trying to do.

One of the most important roles for the translators is to keep the children safe.

They also make sure the children stay seated during the music portion of the camp. They hand out musical instruments and make sure everyone shares if someone else doesn't have a music or art item.

The translators also help Denise lead the children in song and they collect the musical instruments at the end of the music portion of camp.

After the music portion of the camp the children played with a giant parachute that allows many to participate.

During the parachute game the translators encouraged the children holding babies to watch, while the other children take hold of the parachute. Up to 100 children can play this



The children loved playing the "parachute game" that allows many to participate.

Lesson learned... we should pour the water ahead of time.



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The biscuits for some of the children are the first meal they had received that day.

Next the translators had the children sit down for the art portion of the camp.

Our camp in Sudan is open to any child who wants to attend, there is no pre-registration and no age restrictions.

Past history has taught us that we require enough art supplies for about 150 children per day.

This year, for the first day of camp we had 150 children average age of 7 years old and a small number of children holding their baby siblings.

For our art segment of the day, we had about 120 little canvas bags with butterflies, lions and ladybugs stencilled on the bags. The older children also received 4 coloured magic markers to colour the bags. The smaller children received paper and pencil crayons.

Allison and Haily helped the smaller children colour on their papers. Some of the younger ones had never held a pencil crayon before so they loved the help from camp counsellors.

The children brought their little canvas bags and magic markers back to camp every day.

On day two of our music/art camp we were totally caught off guard with the number of children that showed up that day and every day after that. That day there were 250 children in all!!!

It makes sense that there would be more children since many families returned back to their home land after the Referendum vote in January 2011.

game at once. They hang onto the parachute and wave it up and down. Then large colourful balls are tossed into the center of the parachute to add to the excitement. The goal of the game is to bounce these balls up and down without them bouncing off the parachute. They absolutely LOVE this game.

Another role the translators have is lining up the children to receive a cup of water. The water break is a new addition to our camp this year. To help us out, Dr. James Pallo, a Dentist from St. Thomas, Ontario donated 1000 paper cups for our camp.

During the first day we learned we should pour the water ahead of time.

During the first day, the translators had the children form two lines and then handed out the water to each child followed by another helper handing out biscuits.

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Some of the younger children had never held a pencil crayon before.



Since we did not have enough craft supplies for everyone we had to be creative to make sure everyone had a chance to make something.

On day 2 we made masks. Again the older children got the paper masks to colour and the smaller children coloured with pencil crayons on paper.

In order to make the paper last we tore the sheets in half so that the supplies would do us for the whole camp.

On day 3 we held a parade. Before the parade, Denise taught the children a new song that they could sing while marching in our parade.

The song she taught them was “We Are Marching in the Light of God”.

We are marching in the light of God,
We are marching in the light of God,
We are marching, we are marching ,
We are marching in the light of God.

We had to prepare some musical instruments so everyone could have one to play. We used large colourful jingle bells with pipe cleaners attached for handles.

Smaller jingle bells were attached to stretchy hair wraps and the children could put them on their ankles or their arms.

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We also made colourful streamers from crepe paper, masking tape and Popsicle sticks. Some of the streamers were made from silver Christmas garland and attached with masking tape to Popsicle sticks.

Our translators helped to assemble the streamers and musical jingle bells.

On parade day our translators assembled 250 children in 2 lines. Children caring their baby siblings were able to join in to. We handed out the streamers and musical instruments and I am pleased to say there was enough for everyone.

Denise led the way and the children followed waving their streamers, shaking the jingle bells and singing their new song. It was really amazing to watch. The children loved it.

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The children enjoyed making butterflies by colouring coffee filters and wrapping pipe cleaners around them.

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It was so much fun we held the parade again a couple of days later.

During the camp, the children also made butterflies by colouring coffee filters and wrapping the pipe cleaners around the filter to create the body and antenna.

Since we did have lots of paper stickers and foam stickers we passed them out to the children so they could put them on their drawings.

On the last day of camp we had finger puppets for the children that we had assembled the day before camp. We glued colourful fun fur on the puppets head and then drew a smiley face on each finger with glitter glue. We had 150 puppets and 250 children.

Once the initial chaos had past, Denise was finally able to sing a song with the puppets.



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Working together, our team ran the music and art camp for 6 days and each day we would see the same little faces.



In hind sight we should have cut the fingers off the gloves then each child would have had one finger puppet.

Working together, our team ran the music and art camp for 6 days. Every day we would see the same little faces.

It always amazed us that some of the children joined us each day even though they had to walk a very long distance to be there.

Each year we run the music and art camp I feel it is such a privilege to share our passion for music and art with these very special children.

It is my hope, and that of my team mates, that we have brought some joy and laughter to these little children.

We hope they will carry these fun times that we shared together in their memories always... as I know we all will.

Sincerely,

Lucy Ogletree & Denise Pelley



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“Play, while it cannot change the external reality of children’s lives, it can be a vehicle for children to explore and enjoy their differences and similarities and to create, even for a brief time, a more just world where everyone is an equal and valued participant.”

- Patricia G. Ramsey



Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan



Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan (CASS) is working to help the people of southern Sudan rebuild their lives and communities after decades of brutal war. <http://www.web.net/cass/>