

The Red Hippo Arts Project

Charlotte Henderson's Web Log

2 Days to Go...

Jul 29, 2008 in Uncategorized

Hi Everybody! Only 2 more days before we leave, and I find myself both excited and nervous. Despite months of planning, I feel incredibly unprepared- I'm going into something new and I guess I can't ever really be "ready" for it. I take comfort in the fact that I really know this is where God wants me to be. I'm still in the process of packing- trying to organize large quantities of art supplies with Chara and finding ways to package them safely (think 10L of acrylic paint, in a suitcase) but overall, things are coming along well and I'm feeling basically okay about everything (VERY excited). Well, thanks for taking the time to read this, I'll keep you posted Charlotte

One Reply

1. *Justine S.*

Jul 30th, 2008 at 8:48 pm

Best of luck Charlotte! You'll get used to blogging in no time, and if not, you have several good excuses not to update... namely being very busy :D Have fun!

In Uganda!!

Aug 3, 2008 in Uncategorized

Hello Everyone!

I'm now in Uganda after two very comfortable plain rides! It's so beautiful here! The earth and houses are all a rusty red colour and everything is covered in lush green plants. Almost everything that's happened so far could fill a blog entry- but I only have 4 minutes so this will be quite brief! Today we got to meet the ex-street boys (+6 girls) and they did a show for us (they are very talented- I'm not- they made me try and juggle, which was, at least humorous). They are a very moving group that have literally taken themselves off the street and made a living for themselves through their talents in acrobatics, dancing and jewelry making. They also served us a HUGE lunch, which was delicious! Well, I've got to go, but I'll write again soon! Charlotte

A quick Post

Aug 5, 2008 in Uncategorized

Hi there All!

This will be quick s the computer I'm using is slow and annoying- but here goes. Yesterday we met the kids we're working with; they where so excited that when they spotted us form down the road all 30 of them started to scream and ran up to hug us yelling "Teacher, Teacher"it was so moving!! Today we started our program with them and it went really well. We talked about maps, and drew our routes to the school using landmarks.

6 Replies

1. *ian*

Aug 5th, 2008 at 7:46 pm

did the paint arrive okay? I would like to see some of the maps the children made sometime love you, Dad

2. *jen*

Aug 5th, 2008 at 10:09 pm

*Charlotte! So many posts already! I'm overwhelmed!
And thank you.*

3. *Nikki*

Aug 5th, 2008 at 10:48 pm

Hey Charlotte! I'm so excited for you! Uganda sounds amazing! I'll keep praying for you! Keep up the great work!

-Nikki

4. *Nikki*

Aug 12th, 2008 at 1:08 am

Urgh! I commented on this a week ago, but it never showed up!

I'm so glad to hear what's going on over there Char!! Keep the spirit alive; I know you're making so much difference! I saw you and Chara and everyone in the Greetings from Africa video, and it made me so happy. Stay strong in Christ!

Love you,

Nikki

5. *Nikki*

Aug 15th, 2008 at 5:18 pm

Oh dear.... I've now tried to comment on your entry twice in the last week, and it seems to keep disappearing..

I'm proud of you, Charlotte! Can't wait to hear more!

6. *Nikki*

Aug 18th, 2008 at 10:10 am

*Oh. There're all my comments... -_-
Miss you Charlotte! Hope you're doing well :)*

Of Taxis, Chickens and Boda-Bodas

Aug 18, 2008 in Uncategorized

Hey All,
I know it's been a while since I've written-
I hope to rectify that this week!

This is actually something I meant to post a week ago :S

On Saturday of last week a bunch of us went to Jinja to do some basic tourism (Source of the Nile, Bujigali Falls), to get there we took the Taxi. Taxi's here are really cramped little vans that function as buses to certain destinations, picking up and dropping of passengers along the way (there are set stops, but they aren't always respected). The taxis have funny little messages like "licensed to carry 14 passengers" on the side (there are usually at least 16 or 17) and logos painted on the windows by the drivers such as "Theatre of Dreams" "Jesus Saves" "Silence is the Best Weapon" or my personal fav "Patience Pays".

To catch a Taxi to Jinja one must go through the taxi park in downtown Kampala (aka. the worst place on earth) where Taxi's come at you from every direction and merchants yell at you. There are no lanes to direct traffic s it gets pretty chaotic.

The taxi we took to Jinja was fairly cramped (actually not as bad as usual) and the windows in the back didn't all open (the one that did let in a steady stream of exhaust) so it got pretty hot in our Taxi- the Driver also had on a very loud political radio program (all in Lugandan). This is pretty typical taxi fare, but thankfully the ride to Jinja is beautiful and Sarah had some homeopathic meds for carsick tummies.

We had a great time in Jinja itself (I dipped my feet in the Nile!!!) and it was really relaxing for the most part... It was also my first Boda-Boda experience...

Boda-Boda's are motorcycles that take passengers wherever they want to go(No helmets) and as we found out this weekend from a friend about 80% of them aren't licensed at all. To get to the source f the Nile and then to Bujigali falls we took Boda-Boda's 2 by 2 (Sarah and Noelle, Sue and Chara and Rhona- a teacher at In Need Home- and myself). It was terrifying but also kinda fun...

On the way home at the end of the day we caught quite a big Taxi to Kampala and had an eventful ride home includng:

1 little boy peeing (on the bus)

2 loose chickens

3 people on a 2 person seat

4 half hours of crazy driving

And a really long detour...

Ok- thats all for now folks!

Charlotte

One Reply

1. Nikki

Aug 20th, 2008 at 9:24 am

Yay! A new entry! :) Glad to hear from you!

Joel

Aug 21, 2008 in Uncategorized

There is a boy at in need home named Joel who has really touched my heart over the past few weeks. He's a bright kid, his reading and writing skills are certainly up to par, he's got quite an artistic streak, and he's surprisingly good at math. His smile can light up a room and he's always anxious to please his teachers. Joel has often gone far beyond the call of duty when it comes to helping his teachers- on one occasion as Chara and I got ready to alternate students Joel preemptively cleaned up some items Chara had been using, hiding all the drawing pencils and erasers in a basket she was using as part of a still life, and carrying it with him to the next class. When it came time for the next group Chara began to panic at her surprising lack of supplies and ran over to the next class to see where her pencils had gone, at which Joel proudly showed her his new storage system. And yet despite all these qualities every time Joel opens his mouth to speak he's laughed at...

Why? Well, Joel is a bit deaf, and his words can sometimes sound a bit funny (although his English is often better than that of his peers). Understandably Joel's confidence is almost non-existent. The idea of a hearing aide is far out of reach to a boy living in the slum of Namuwongo.

At first glance Joel could appear a troublemaker. Often Joel is unable to understand group directions completely and instead of risking vulnerability by asking for clarifications, he'll act up. He's figured out that appearing confused by asking for help attracts even more negative attention, whereas acting out seems to win him some peer support. Over these past couple weeks I've been able to gain a little of Joel's trust. I've realized that by explaining things to Joel individually he'll stay out of trouble and devote himself thoughtfully to his work. He'll now come over to show me his work with pride and his beautiful smile, and increasingly he'll speak to me in a shy whisper.

What worries me most is Joel's future- He needs a lot of one on one attention, and, where he to get a sponsor for further schooling, he would face classes of 40 or more students. I have no solution to offer, no happy note to end on, I would just ask you to remember Joel in your prayers.

Charlotte

Last Day

Aug 22, 2008 in Uncategorized

Hello All!

Just wanted to write something quick about how things went today!

It was the last day of our program and we finally got a chance to do my "pet project" of building parts of our community that matter to us with found objects.

The kids where brilliant and had a great time building their new "toys" from things they had just found in the streets. We saw a lot of cars/taxis, a few very creative "cooking" themed projects, a microphone made of a plastic bottle, toilet paper roll (doot-doot) and candy wrappers, and at least 2 "cameras".

This project could not have come at a better time- the kids where great (as always) and we saw so mch of each of them in their projects.

It also felt very moving to watch these children turn broken pieces of their world into beautiful meaningful objects...

Later today some of the mothers came to see their children's work, which was also very special.

Ok- Charotte Out