



newsletter

Island Kids
Philippines 

2024/1

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Dear Friends of Island Kids Philippines

With gratitude, the Board and Thomas Kellenberger look back to successful events. We are pleased about the interest shown for his trek and therefore supporting the activity for PIKIFI (Philippine Island Kids Int'l. Foundation, Inc.).

The running of PIKIFI is going on smoothly without Thomas' presence as you can see reading the various articles. In this way he gets the necessary freedom to expand further the work of PIKIFI. He will be presenting the new project in this Newsletter.

We are looking forward to your continuous support.

■ Activities at PIKIFI

- November is the Month of the Children. In 2023, the topic was “Right to Live” for everybody; the subtopics were health, nutrition and protection/safety.
- Since 24th/25th November 2023, some of our children now belong to a group of scouts. They enjoy the games and creative activities, and the physical training does them good. One of the highlights was the training under professional guidance of the fire brigade. Another important factor is the experience as a group which strengthens the relationship between the children and adolescents. Group leaders become persons they trust and role models.
- On 5th December the Department of Education (DepEd) gave to all schools several young trees which were planted in the school yard by our teachers and the pupils.
- On 15th December 2023 Christmas Celebration took place in the School of PIKIFI. In the Philippines this means a party with games, songs, dance and lovely food. Thanks to generous donations for this purpose, a magician was hired for this day and gifts were distributed.

- The girls and boys in the Children’s Village celebrated Christmas with their carers and enjoyed their gifts.
- SM, one of the big shopping malls in CdO, invited our children to activities: the younger ones to an indoor playground, the older ones to the adventure waterpark “Seven Seas”.



Planting trees during activities of PIKIFI.



Christmas Celebration in the School of PIKIFI.

■ No Online Teaching without a Laptop

Public as well as private High Schools and universities have turned more and more towards online rather than face-to-face teaching – a fact that benefits young teenage mothers and students living further away. For this, unfortunately, they need laptops which in the Philippines are a lot more expensive than here even though salaries are considerably lower than in Switzerland and Germany.

Therefore, we constantly and urgently need laptops for our pupils. We are very grateful to educational institutions and companies in Switzerland for donating a large number of used laptops which they themselves replace with new ones. Our experts on site install them and pass them on to the students.

■ New Arrivals at the Children's Village

In November the Department of Justice asked us whether PIKIFI could take on five underage victims of child prostitution. The 12 and 13-year-old girls got into a circle of wrong friends and ended up in a criminal gang. Put under massive pressure from threats of violence, the girls were forced on small boats and transported to big container ships. There the girls were raped by the captain and members of the crew. Thanks to the initiative of a mother, the captain and two members of the crew have now been taken to court for human trafficking. Looking for her missing daughter she was told by another girl what had happened. She then alerted the police, and the victims were freed in a rescue operation. Two of the girls found a new home in our Children's Village.

Also continuing are the night-time actions to fight prostitution of minors, in cooperation with Streetlight and the City Social Welfare and Development (CSWD). Repeatedly we take on girls in our Children's Village after rescue operations, which are often preceded by the building of relationships over months with the victims.

■ Charity Events

The "Gendarmen" with "Quattro Schatzjoni" started the well attended charity events from the end of 2023 to the beginning of 2024. A "schöne Zeit" (wonderful time) is guaranteed when visiting their Christmas concerts on "Some Nights" in December. Already for the 7th time the



BRASSmeetsVOCALS, Signau 2023

musically talented men and women performed "Rock Me" until the church shook. But that was not "Aues, wo zellt" (all that counts) on this evening: For the musicians and singers it was important to support the work of IKP/PIKIFI through the donations after the concert. And this year, Thomas Kellenberger was again present. Not only "500 Miles", but 14'503 km he had walked during his long trek. He gave a short report of his journey and the subsequent exhaustion. But "Wunder gibt es immer wieder" (miracles happen) and Thomas was grateful to be in good health again. With much "Power (of Love)" the artists set off a firework of joy, amazement and enjoyment.

[Die Gendarmen](#)
[Quattro Schatzjoni](#)

A touching event with wow-effects was the [Christmas celebration in Hasle-Rüegsau](#) where visitors wandered from place to place. The collection again was donated for our work.



Christmas celebration in Hasle-Rüegsau.

The furniture company “[Schubiger](#)” – together with [Galvaswiss AG](#) one of our main sponsors – offered IKP a platform in their furniture company and on their website, in order to draw attention to our work in the Philippines.

■ Multivision Presentations

Since January, Thomas Kellenberger has had the opportunity to talk about his exciting experiences and encounters during his 21-month trek back to the Philippines at numerous big and small events. With his multivision presentations he is able to show touching images and videos.

- In Bern and Zurich the events were organized and run by Philippine groups.
- The people of Beatenberg celebrated the return of one of their own with standing ovations after his presentation.
- Spellbound, the pupils of a church school class and some parents followed the presentation of Thomas in Hasle.
- The event in Rüderswil was moved to the church at short notice because of the large number of visitors.
- In the Evangelic Methodist Church in Bümpliz, the audience listened to Thomas’ travel report with interest.
- In the Catholic Church St. Karl, the Filipino Community in Central Switzerland followed Thomas’ presentation with keen interest.

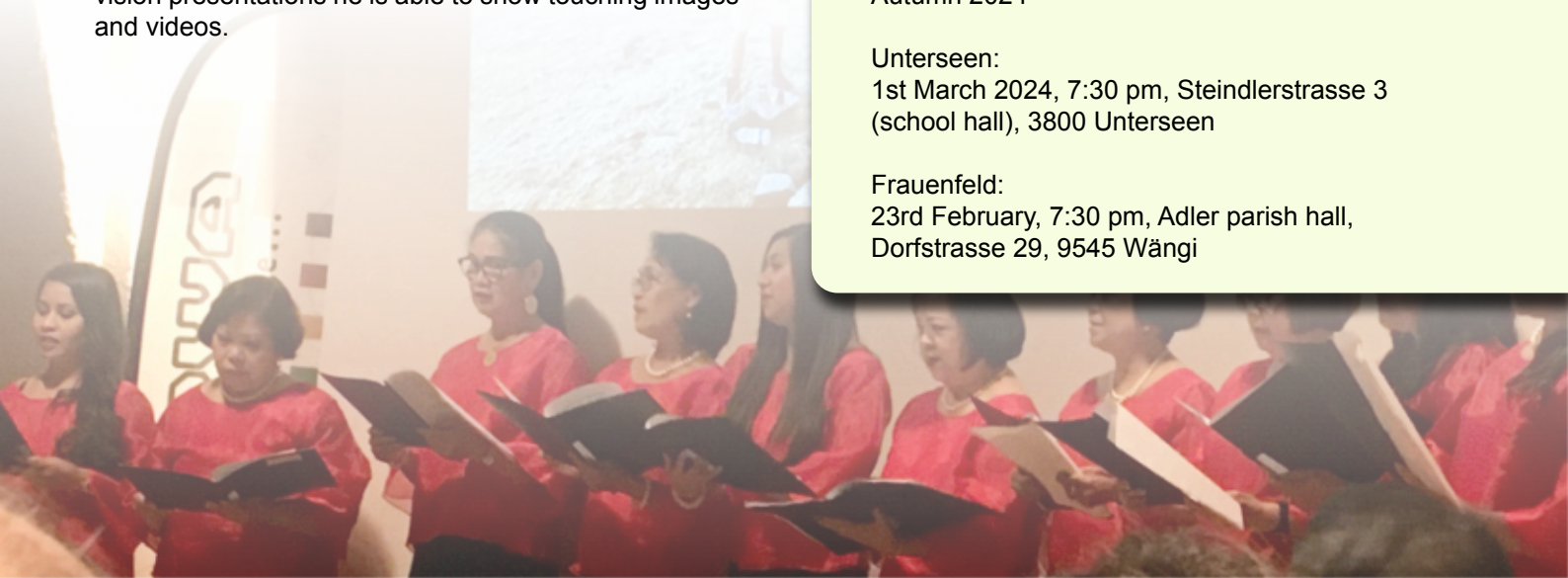
Several media invited Thomas for an interview. We are very pleased with the interest shown for his walk for a good cause with which he will further increase the awareness of the work of IKP/PIKIFI and find support for it. Anyone who would like to invite him for further presentations in autumn 2024 can do so at info@islandkids.ch.

Upcoming Events:

Thun:
Autumn 2024

Unterseen:
1st March 2024, 7:30 pm, Steindlerstrasse 3
(school hall), 3800 Unterseen

Frauenfeld:
23rd February, 7:30 pm, Adler parish hall,
Dorfstrasse 29, 9545 Wängi



■ Fates

X, a girl from the Gang TBS 13, whom our employees got to know in the Skatepark for Jesus (see [Newsletter 2023 4](#)), has told us her story. She was sexually abused by the new partner of her mother. She then ran away and ended up with the Gang. For four years, the underage girl contributed to their cost of living through prostitution. We succeeded in contacting her biological father who lived an eight-hour drive away. A cousin picked X. up and took her to her father, where hopefully she is now getting back into a normal life.

■ Plans for the Future

PIKIFI is still almost exclusively dependent on donations. Considering the tight economic situation in Switzerland and Germany, it gets more and more difficult to raise the funds. Instead of building a second Children's Village as originally planned, the financing of the operating costs has priority.

After the pandemic, the charity's own shop with coffee shop which has been planned for quite some time will be opened and put into operation.

Furthermore, with the donations collected through his project "Kuya Goes Home", Thomas plans to buy some agricultural land. A farm will be built, which enables the Children's Village and School to supply to a large degree its own fresh vegetables, fruit and eventually rice. Later, the project will be further extended.

- In a first step, the farm will be set up by using gentle and sustainable methods of agriculture: organic cultivation, no monocultures, no deforestation but partial reforestation. With our produce we want to supply our Children's Houses and the kitchen of the Day School.
- In a second step, foster parents will move in to look after girls and boys in long-term care.
- There are also plans for time-out places for young people in crisis situations.
- During the Summer holidays we would like to organize experiential education camps for children and adolescents living in care in the city. They will learn how to deal with nature in a responsible way, and to plant and harvest. Through these experiential educational activities and hikes they can better process their traumatic experiences. Moreover, the team spirit within the group will be strengthened.

This way, the new project will support and supplement the existing Children's Village in the medium and long term without causing additional operating costs. Planning has started several months ago: We visited similar projects, found a potential plot of land and partners for our project. We are confident to start the realization in Spring/Summer 2024.



■ We Are Mourning

We are very sad to announce that J. suffering from diabetes mellitus type 1 (see [Newsletter 2023 2](#)) has died on 28th November 2023 from her illness. J. had returned to her family, but kept running away. She suffered mentally, and therefore became more and more negligent about her health situation. Even intensive talks with our social workers and warnings by the doctors could not prevent that she was again leaving for a longer period without insulin. When she was finally found, her blood sugar level was up to 41 mmol/L. Whereas last summer she could still be saved, this time help came too late. Even in hospital the organ failure could not be stopped and a difficult young life ended far too



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Actual information you'll find as well
www.islandkids.de
www.islandkids.ch

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