

New structure for the Bayasgalant board

After the launch of Bayasgalant in 2009 it soon became clear during 2010 that all the necessary work couldn't be done any more just voluntarily. The board reached the point when it acknowledged that salaries had to be paid to guarantee professionalism. The decisions for a change and new structure were made at the boardmeeting in October 2010. Flavia Grossmann, president of the board: „as founding members of Bayasgalant (former Asral-And since 2003) we feel the responsibility of the growing charity. It needs to create paid jobs in order to fulfill the required tasks, like raising money, budget control and strategy plans for the project“. So from January 2011 Christine Jaeggi and Martina Zuercher will share an 80% employment as executive directors of the management board. Flavia Grossmann will be a member of the management board employed for 10%.

We are expecting the 90% job will boost Bayasgalant's many projects and greatly improve the situation for the children and their families in Ulan Bator. Christine Jaeggi, Martina Zürcher and Flavia Grossmann are obliged to report back to board members Sabine Lanz and Michael Buergi every month. By the end of 2011 an evaluation will be made to assess if the expected improvements occurred or if adjustments are needed.

Successful benefit concert and Christmas markets

On 27th November the band „Death byChocolate“ performed in the Etage Club in Biel for the children in Mongolia. Bayasgalant benefitted by 2'400.00 Swiss francs. The evening was a success and a big thank you goes to the band, the people from the Etage Club who worked for free during this evening (www.etageclub.ch and www.deathbychocolate.ch).

Volunteer workers sold our felt and other products at Christmas markets in Zuerich and Basel despite the snow and cold – it felt like being in Mongolia!

Felt products

After a successful winter season selling many of our felt slippers we are moving on with new ideas for spring. A trained Swiss seamstress will teach parents of Bayasgalant children how to produce and sew with felt during February and March. The goal is more variation and a quality improvement of our products and also to provide a regular income to the parents. Please check our shop www.bayasgalant.org/shop regularly. By the way – winter is still on, so why not keeping your feet warm with a pair of our felt slippers?

Saturday activities in the daycare centre in Ulan Bator

As there is no school on Saturdays these days are used for different activities, one is to do handicrafts, which the children enjoy very much because there is no pressure to achieve good results, its all about being creative and experimenting with scissors, paper, glue and colourpens. Additionally the daycare centre will also be used as an information- and training centre for parents, with more courses to come during this year. So far the parents get offered free courses, such as «personal hygiene and health», «family planning», «how to apply for a job». Because some parents are unemployed for a very long time, they have lost the ability to be punctual. So often they turn up at appointments late or not at all. Bogi, our social worker, is trying to teach them how important reliability

is in regards to finding work.

Apart from theory and courses we also provide practical help. For example, a father got a job as a taxi driver because Bogi solved the problem he had with his insurance card. She helped fill in the necessary forms and went with him to the different authorities.

During a health information course a young man approached Bogi and told her his arm is getting paralyzed because during prior surgery a screw was left in it and he will need another operation which will cost 80.00 Swiss Francs but he hasn't got the money. Bogi helped out unburecratically!

Multivision show «riding on a bicycle through Mongolia in Winter»

Last year during the icy winter of 2010 with temperatures dropping to -40C a young Swiss couple were cycling through Mongolia. They had already ridden their bikes through Central Asia for 5 months on their journey towards the Himalaya.

Brigitte and Ivo Jost are brave and gentle travellers and passionate speakers too, so they are touring Switzerland from the 3rd of February with their multivisionshow. You will find the dates and locations on their website www.fotofolio.ch. We are accompanying them on their tour and selling our felt products.

Reminder of the member meeting

The annual member meeting will be held on Wednesday 16th March in the Restaurant Etage in Biel. Please enroll your self by email or by letter before the end of February. Donors are welcome to attend as well without being allowed to vote of course.

The formal part will start at 8pm followed by Giovanna Wegmüller, our volunteer worker, talking of her impressions of the two months she spent in the day carecentre in Ulan Bator.

Can membership fees be deducted on tax?

Often we get asked if donations and membership fees are tax deductible. Donations can be deducted, membershipfees can't. According to ZEWO, the organisation for charities, membership fees are considered as promised support for the organisation. ZEWO quotes «Membership fees aren't allowed to be deducted because a member owes this fee to the organisation, so it's not a «free will donation as a member you ought to pay the amount you sign for».