



Mid Essex Group

Spring 2009

Host First Timers

by Susan and Paul Eley

We'll always remember July 2008 - the year we became host family first timers to two children from Belarus. Any worries we'd had were forgotten as Kosta and Denis burst into our home and into our lives. It was immediately obvious that the boys - aged eight and nine - were determined to enjoy their holiday with us and we had no choice but to go along with them. We'd worried that they would be homesick - no problem, they soon made the firmest friends with our Labrador, our family, friends, neighbours - everyone they met. Language wasn't a problem; we got by with gestures and drawings, as well as the phrase book. We were surprised at how quickly the boys picked up the words for things they wanted and how well they made themselves understood.



We'd worried about how to amuse them, but they had plenty of ideas of their own - let's swim, play football, go to the park - Play Station !

We'd worried about what to feed them - they launched into most simple foods, chicken, sausage, bacon, potatoes, tomatoes, fruit and ice cream - Please ?

Kosta and Denis enjoyed outings with the group, especially the cycle rides and were always happy to see their friends. They also liked to be at home, with simple games, football in the garden and walks with the dog.

Family outings were fun; we took them to Coggeshall Carnival, to Southend and to Maldon Prom. The Discovery Centre at Great Notley was a big hit, as was the Crazy Kids indoor play centre at Braintree. Swimming, cafes, parks and shops were an endless source of fun.



Do you know someone who might help?

We need new host families.

Please pass this newsletter to anyone you think might be interested in finding out more about this worthwhile scheme, or they can contact Stephanie or Chris direct on 01245 361361

CLOTHES BANK

Most of the children arrive with very little clothing, we therefore, need good quality clothing for them and soft travel bags for them to take back to Belarus. If you have any unwanted clothes that would be suitable for children 8 to 13 years please contact us and let know.

STOP PRESS: Congratulations to our Belarussian friend Olga and her English husband-James, on the birth of their son Charlie on 17th April.

2009 Holiday

Plans are still being finalised for the holiday this year however we do know that the children will arrive on July 10 and leave on August 7. In the meantime they'll visit the Optician and the Dentist, spend time on the Beach at Frinton, have a weekend at Fairplay House, go on a Bike Ride on the Flitch Way, have several BBQ, lots of Swimming, bike rides and we hope a great time.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Chris and Stephanie attended the national conference of Chernobyl Charities on 28 March at Solihull. This was a very good event and very informative. In the morning they were addressed by the British Ambassador to Belarus and in the afternoon by two representatives from the Belarusian Embassy. The really good news is that the ongoing dispute between our two Governments over the children's holidays seems to have been resolved and plans are pressing ahead for us to host children from Terekhovka

Representatives from all charities addressed the gathered throng and reported on their work over the last 12 months. All groups shared a concern over funding during the recession. However, there was general agreement that we in Mid Essex are doing very well. So, well done to one and all.

A note from Chris & Stephanie

A warm welcome to our new host families and helpers. It's good to have you on board.

After the successful 2008 holiday it was an added bonus to have received such lovely letters of thanks from the Belarussian children. These were translated by our friend James and his Belarussian wife Olga. (our thanks to you both).

Lisa Pearce recently held a "Girlie Friday" event offering coffee/lunch, together with a manicure or massage. It was a great success, raising over £300. Well done Lisa.

This was followed by Kevin Church organising a "Dress Down "day at Fords, and raising over £500. Well done Kevin.

Other Fundraising events are in the pipeline including a quiz night (see above) so watch this space. Please make every effort to support these events. They are great fun, and a great way to make friends.

On to 2009, things are progressing well, and we look forward to an eventful summer holiday

Friends of Chernobyl

The recently established Friends scheme has proved very popular with many of our long standing supporters together with some new ones who have pledged financial support to the group. The Friends enables those who want to be involved with the group but not host children or run events, to provide valuable support.

The subscription for 2009 is just £20 with the option for people to make further donations.

In exchange, apart from knowing that your contribution is going to help the children, we'll send you a Newsletter twice a year to update on how we are getting on.

If you, or anyone you know might be interested please contact Ed or Jeremy Heigham on 01621 869723 or on email at Photofaxessex@aol.com or speak to any member of the Mid Essex Group

QUIZ NIGHT

Bocking Village Hall

NOVEMBER 20, 2009

Please put the date in your diary and start planning to enter a team.

For more details contact Chris or Stephanie



REMEMBER CHERNOBYL
26th April 1986 www.rememberchernobyl.org

Chernobyl Children's Project (UK)
Mid Essex Group-Chris & Stephanie
Woodhouse 01245 361361