



CNCF Newsletter

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Volume 4



Introduction

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Welcome to the summer edition of the newsletter, which we hope you will enjoy. The last four months have been extremely busy for the Foundation and in particular the Irish office. We have organised and been involved in several fundraising events, including

the Irish launch of the Mongol Rally.

Catherine Conlon has compiled a book entitled *Sonas*, from which all profits will come to the Foundation, more details on this can be found in the article below. Christina wrote the foreword for the book: "I love love,

because love is all powerful. Real love has to come from inside. A bit like a river, it flows through every blood vessel in our body, through the pit of the stomach up into the soul & heart and it speaks through the eyes". On that note, we hope you enjoy.

1. Catherine Conlon, 'Sonas, Celtic thoughts on Happiness'

We are delighted to introduce Catherine Conlon's upcoming book *'Sonas, Celtic Thoughts on Happiness'* which will be hitting the shelves in October. We are looking for as much support as possible to help it achieve bestseller status leading up to Christmas.

Catherine is a Lecturer in UCC in the department of Epidemiology and Public Health, a mum and someone who cares deeply about the challenges facing the youth of today. *'Sonas'* is 'a response to the surge of negativity and commercialism in Irish society that makes it difficult, especially for young people, to identify and source real

challenge and beauty.' *'Sonas'* is based on the theme of Happiness and has contributions from various Irish public figures who each give a personal and moving account of their interpretation of the world. Catherine says the idea for the book came to her when observing her children and people around her and the importance they put on the material things in life. Around the same time, Catherine read Christina's first book *'Bridge across my sorrows'* and was inspired to create a book that would 'reflect the philosophies, motivations and spiritual paths that can help us to keep an optimistic eye to the future,

even in troubled times'. Contributors include Bertie Ahern, Patricia Scanlan, Seamus Heaney and many more. Christina Noble herself wrote a beautiful piece titled 'Love' which will be the foreword in the book.

All profits from the sales will go to CNCF and we will keep you updated on where the book will be available closer to the time.

We would like to congratulate Catherine on this fantastic achievement and express our deep gratitude on behalf of the sunshine children in Vietnam and Mongolia.

Please contact the Dublin office for further information.





2 Table Quiz, The Silver Tasse

Our recent table quiz held in The Silver Tasse, Loughlinstown was a great success, raising approx. €1,500 on the night! Mary Dorothy and Caron Clancey from DELL were the chief organisers of the event and, along with the Dublin office, managed to gather some great spot prizes including a night at the Beacon Hotel, a full day spa treatment and various restaurant vouchers. Mike Morrissey hosted the night and definitely gave Chris Tarrant a run for his money with his stern take on the questions, and with 'who

wants to be a millionaire' theme music playing in the background, it really went down a charm with the teams. While a certain degree of brain exercise was required to compete, there was



something there for everyone and, all in all, a great night was had by all.

We'd like to congratulate the winning team, 'The Secret Squirrels', whose team members Frances Kearns, Mary Jane Barnes, Ruth Barnes & Johnny Barnes generously donated the winning prize of €200.00 back to CNCF (shown in picture)

CNCF Dublin will keep you updated in relation to future dates for quizzes to be held next year.

3 Colaiste Dhulaigh

The 4th year students of Colaiste Dhulaigh recently held their transition year graduation and Christina was invited along to meet the students who had worked with such dedication all year to fundraise for CNCF and raising over €3K in the process.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, 7 students had been chosen to go to Ho Chi Minh to visit the Foundation's Social and Medical Centre and they were delighted to meet Christina at the

graduation to recount their experiences from the trip.

The group spent everyday with the children in the S&M centre and also with Ciarna, the Arts & Music director, in the Kindergarten. They visited the Centre for



visually impaired children where they had a musical jam session with the children there. The students agreed that it had been a life changing experience; one they'll never forget.

During the graduation ceremony the students sang 'Hero' by Mariah Carey to Christina who returned the gesture by singing 'I believe in angels' after a moving speech about youth and the importance of education.

We'd like to say a big thanks to all the transition year students for all their hard work for CNCF throughout the year.

St. Vincent De Paul, Youth for Justice

Christina was the guest 'inspirational speaker' at the St. Vincent De Paul Youth for Justice' event in Sligo this summer. 'Youth for Justice' is a school based programme that aims to give young people an opportunity to do something that will make a difference to their community. The transition years had done great things throughout the

year including a homeless sit in and working on many issues including bullying, addiction, a youth forum, fundraising and many more.

The chief organizer of the event, Sharon Tuohy, had visited CNCF in Vietnam in the past and specifically asked for Christina to make a speech. Christina spoke

of youth and her personal experiences with poverty and inequality which left the audience moved and inspired.



"Supporting people in poverty has to be more than just immediate financial relief, it has to lead to opportunities and choices that otherwise don't exist for people."



4 Volunteer/Staff Interview with Ciara Shouldice, former Physiotherapist in the Social and Medical Centre

Ciara Shouldice started out volunteering for CNCF in Ho Chi Minh and was then employed as the a physiotherapist in the Social & Medical Centre. She recently returned to Dublin and dropped by the Irish office for a chat.



Ciara Shouldice with Thong, one of the children at the S&M centre

child friendly. It's a really great place for kids.

What challenges did you face?

Mosquitoes were the biggest challenge! The humidity was very tiring and I remember not being able to sleep in the

first week. Communication was difficult at the beginning but I learnt some Vietnamese as time went on and taught English in exchange.

How did you go from being a Volunteer to staff member?

Well there was a need for a qualified physiotherapist and I was there at the right time, right place. The RCSI sponsored the position for a year and half. I got on great with the local physiotherapists and staff.

What advice would you give to anyone considering volunteering in CNCF Vietnam?

I say Go for it! If it's something you've always wanted to do, don't think twice. You benefit from reading Christina's books and learning about her mission. It would also be

beneficial to learn about all the projects out there, the Social & Medical centre is not the only place out there. If you get the chance, read up on the culture before you go out and try to learn even the most basic words in Vietnamese. Bring over empty suitcases as there's loads to buy there. Also check out the wish list on the website and bring over anything you can.

Ciara, what are your best memories from working there?

I really loved the day to day life. The Vietnamese have many celebrations for teachers, students, women etc. My fondest memories are of walking in everyday and seeing the babies getting up each morning. The centre for the visually impaired was so inspirational and the kids had such a great rapport with their carers.. All the kids are so wonderful and I'll miss them a lot.

Finally, how would you describe yourself?

Sporty, love travelling, independent, vegetarian animal lover! :)

What made you decide to Volunteer for CNCF in Vietnam?

When I was studying with the Royal College of Surgeons we had been fundraising for CNCF and Christina had given a talk there. I was so inspired and, shortly there after, read her book. I knew then that I wanted to go to Vietnam or Mongolia to help out and I was lucky enough to get sponsorship from the RCSI with a couple of other students.

What was your first impression?

I was expecting it to resemble an orphanage of some kind but it was nothing like that. All the children seemed so happy and the Foundation

5. The Mongol Rally

This year the Mongol Rally teams left our shores on July 19th and David was there to wish them well and to accept a cheque for their fundraising efforts in the past year. Some of the teams have already arrived at CNCF in Ulaanbaatar but they still await the arrival of our Irish teams who include:

World Adrenaline, Trailer Park Paddies and Vagabonds of the Eastern World.

We wish them all the best on the remainder of their journey and their safe return to Ireland where we hope to catch up with them to hear about their adventures.



6. Floods in Mongolia

As you may know, there was heavy flooding in Mongolia two weeks ago which resulted in over 20 fatalities and hundreds of homes being left destroyed.

The Ger District around the city was badly affected. Three adults and five children drowned including one of our children who was sponsored out of Hong Kong.

Three of the children killed were from one family and our team in Mongolia have located the parents and are helping them. The roads were so muddy they could only get in to those areas recently but they managed to get there and help with blankets, mattresses, food and a small cash donation.

Most of the homes have been replaced by the Government (about 180 gers) and the Foundation has supplied 5 gers.

We would like to make an appeal to anyone who is in a position to sponsor a child or if you have friends/family who may be able to help as there are many children in need of sponsorship as a result of these floods.



Other news & things to look out for

Volunteer Appeal

We are currently in need of 3 Volunteers in Vietnam to work in the Social & Medical Centre from September. If you would like to Volunteer or you know anyone who may be able to give their time, please contact the Dublin office and speak to David or Maeve about the requirements and vetting process.

Documentary

As some of you may know Christina is in the process of filming a documentary with a great team who each have a profound interest in CNCF and Christina's story. We anticipate it's release in 2010 and judging from the footage that has already been captured, we're extremely confident it will be one to watch out for.

TV3 Interview

If you missed seeing Christina on TV3 last May, you can watch on the TV3 website: www.tv3.ie.

Simply type Christina Noble into the small search box on the top right hand corner and the links for the video will come up. Christina was there to speak about being an inspiration to others and she also spoke of the recent Ryan Report and her own experience as a child in an Institution in Galway.

A short, moving story from Mongolia, from Eamonn Thornton

These three children were found by our sponsorship team in Ulaanbaatar while passing through Endernet in August 2008.

Their health was in very poor condition and they suffered with hunger and scabies.

Their mother was just about to start a two year jail sentence for assault so it was decided to bring the girls to live in the Ger Village.



Their names are Uuganzaya 12, Ariunzaya 10 and Ek-hariun 7.

Ariunzaya was in the worst condition and had lost the use of her legs so for the first few weeks in the Ger Village she had to be wheeled around.

During the Beijing Olympic Games the team installed a television in the community ger because the children were very interested in following the progress of the Mongolian athletes.

They were all watching when Mongolia won a gold medal for Judo and were jumping for joy when, without warning, Ariunzaya started to jump around with them and she has been walking ever since.

The athlete who won the gold medal eventually heard the story and signed a photo of himself just for her and it finally reached her at the concert for the Mongol Rally on Saturday last.



The photo of the three sisters in fancy dress was taken at our Ger Village Christmas party just four months after they arrived there and their transformation is evident.

Thank You

Many thanks to all of our sponsors for their continued support, especially through these tough times when every penny counts. We wish you an enjoyable last few summer weeks and we look forward to corresponding with you in the near future. Please don't hesitate to contact the Dublin office at any time to speak with Maeve or David. Email: m.meleady@cncf.ie & d.caslin@cncf.ie or phone: 01 645 5555

