



WOW-Day at Filstal-Göppingen Waldorf School

Is it possible to have worse weather conditions for a charity run than just above 0°C with continuous rain and all that on October 17, 2010, when there is supposed to be a so-called "Golden October"? Well, ultimately, the weather did not disturb as at all. Without further ado, we all moved into the schoolhouse, relocated the start line to the main entrance, created a lap circling the school at first and then partly leading through the building itself, as it is not possible to circle our school building completely, and within a few minutes we had an available running lap of about 333 m.

The little ones ran for half an hour, everybody as much as they were able to. The kids gave their best, while their parents and teachers cheered for them. Afterwards, children with happy and bright red faces received their well-earned certificate of participation. They had diligently searched for sponsors in advance and some had even commitments for 50 € per lap and above. There may have even been parents who slowed down their little ones a bit, so that the sponsors did not have reach too deep into their pockets... The second run was no less competitive when students from class 5 onwards put in their laps during a one-hour session. And finally some high school students, parents and teachers got under way during the third run. They were just cheered on just as enthusiastically as the competitors in the runs before. An outstanding example for cheering was a colleague who stood under an umbrella for more than an hour...

In addition, various performances provided a terrific atmosphere, including "African drumming" by Enyo Kelé (a group that partly comes from Sierra Leone) who performed together with students form class 7, the performance of the school's own big band and performances from two other bands: "Two lives" and "Jumpin' Point." Last but not least our dedicated moderator (Philipp Heitmann) was a true lucky strike. All around the charity run there were activities going on such as handicrafts (rattles made from toilet paper rolls) or a circus workshop, a play area (games from foreign countries), a lottery and a goal-shooting contest (which unfortunately really suffered from the constant rain). Food and drinks were of course available as well with a varied offering of hot sausages, a café and a buffet (partly with exotic dishes).

Overall it was a very successful event - something other than Martins market and summer festival, even though some voices moaned a bit about the plenteousness of activities and offerings of the event. However, it was a very effective festival: the donated amount reached € 20,000. With so much money a lot can be achieved. And we hope that the initiatives we've chosen beforehand, in Sierra Leone and Sao Paulo, let us know for what they use the money.

This was our first (but certainly not last) charity run and it was not only such a success due to the achieved amount of donations and the great atmosphere. At least just as important was the

experience that many people, some very spontaneously, helped on the day of the event itself: students, parents, teachers and sponsors. At this point I would like to express a big thank you!

How to organize a charity run - or: Think big!

"Think big", was one of the first things that Rafael Treite, a former student of Göppingen Waldorf School and founder of "Running for Kids" in Esslingen, told me and that gave me momentum to tackle the organisation of the event. He was so right. At a charity run a decent support program is just as important as the run itself (see report). Furthermore, the event should be attended by a patron (who unfortunately could not attend) and actually local celebrities (which we want to take into consideration next time) as well as the press (who was invited but did not come). And one should not underestimate what a good atmosphere can be created by a professional moderator (Rafael was actually supposed to take over that part, but then sent us a worthy representative). For a charity run one also needs some time in advance, so we chose to organise the event not on WOW-Day itself, but on a Saturday in mid-October. Finally, it takes a lot of people who are committed to help: such as high school students, who for example, who were responsible for the lottery including the solicitation of prizes in shops, the sausage grilling, the buffet, the goal-shooting contest and other activities. We had actually formed a complete preparation team of students from different classes. But otherwise we "tricked" a bit. The WOW-Day Saturday was one of the compulsory Saturdays and thus the high school students "had" to contribute in some way (however it was not possible to control attendance, which frustrated some of those, who were actually present). Then there were also those who gladly used the unique opportunity "to become famous" at our school, such as the bands that earned much admiration. With 3 adults and Sven (grade 10) we were a very small "core team", but considered ourselves lucky to have had access to many charity run documents through Rafael and therefore we did not have to invent the wheel all over again. For those who wish to organise such an event at their school, we will be glad to pass on some necessary information and material. Nevertheless, it was all new and very exciting on the day itself and only worked due to the spontaneous help and flexibility of many parents and students.

Sabine Thoma, Teacher