

HABITAT ART DAY and BENEFIT BRUNCH @ the InterContinental Hotel April 16th and 17th, 2005

Dear HfHW members, volunteers and friends,

Now that the events of this past weekend have passed, I would like to report that the Habitat Art Day and Benefit Brunch were both great successes!



The Habitat Art Day, on Saturday April 16th, was a day of intense art-making at Centrum Łowicka. There were several Habitat families from Phase I and Phase II who came to show their support for the foundation. Facilitated by community artist and key organizer, Laura Evonne Steinman, they worked side by side with other families and participants to create beautiful, colorful and artistic "habitat" homes, each one unique! Patricia Hermes, teacher and Habitat Club Leader at the American School of Warsaw, along with several of her students, created one of the most beautiful houses, which had such intricate details! Izumi Uchida, art administrator and one of the key organizers, designed a kitchen with avant-garde fixtures and wrote "Habitat for Humanity-Warsaw" in Japanese!

Our objective of creating an event to increase awareness about the HfHW foundation and what we do, by presenting an informative exhibition of HfHW's Józefosław project and by including the Habitat families, volunteers and the greater Warsaw community in a day of art-making, was certainly fulfilled. Several people mentioned that the exhibition helped to clarify what the HfH Warsaw affiliate actually does and what we have achieved on the Building site so far. There were even a couple of new people who signed up to volunteer! Most of the participants were so involved in the art project, that they did not want to part with their creation at the end of the event. (However, some of the houses were donated to HfHW for a future auction). And last but not least, Ania Mierzejewska did a great job in organizing the bake sale, which helped sustain the dynamic creative process.



The General Manager of the InterContinental Hotel, Mr. Karl Hala, expressed his great satisfaction about the Benefit Brunch, at the Downtown Restaurant, on Sunday April 17th. There was such a great attendance, that the management was required to open a second restaurant, The Frida, in order to accommodate all the guests. The High-School Principal of the American School of Warsaw attended with his wife and colleagues and diplomats from the French Embassy were also present. All the guests were very contented by the brunch and the children who came were very excited by the kids' corner including: art projects - facilitated by hand in hand arts, the magician who built a "habitat" house out of balloons and free "house" toys, which were donated by Cobi, S.A.. As a final result, The InterContinental Hotel pledged a donation of 2,175PLN (20% of the cost of a ticket for each guest). Mr. Hala mentioned that he would be happy to host another similar event with Habitat in the future.

Representatives from the new warsaw express and the Warsaw Insider, the media sponsors, were present on Saturday and Sunday. In order to announce the then up-coming Habitat Art Day and Sunday Benefit Brunch, the new warsaw express printed two articles about the events (April 1, 2005 issue, p.7; April 15, 2005 issue, p.11). The Warsaw Insider printed a full page with photographs about the events (April 2005 issue, p.9; and a small announcement in the March 2005 issue, p.8). The Warsaw Insider representative not only got involved in the art-making, but expressed personal interest in Habitat's activities and mentioned that she would publicize HfHW whenever possible. Thanks to these media contributions, we were able to reach out to the English-speaking Warsaw community, as well.

A warm and special thanks goes to the other key organizers, Laura Evonne Steinman, Izumi Uchida and Patricia Hermes for all their time and dedication to organizing the events and to the InterContinental Hotel for its major donation to Habitat for Humanity-Warsaw! To those of you who were present at the Habitat Art Day and Benefit Brunch, thank you so much for your help and support for HfHW! To the others, who helped prepare for the events, especially to Vineta Kravchenko and Kasia Sterna, thank you also very much for your efforts!

Best regards,

Joanna Kuo

HfHW Volunteer Fundraiser and Public Relations