

The Puspanesam Home

By Caroline Davis

In February, the newly elected IWA Committee talked about focusing the Association's charity goals on one organization in order to maximize

impact. We discovered the

Puspanesam Home, caring for about 20 children and 5 elderly homeless women. It was obvious from the moment we set foot inside that they needed our help.



The Director of the Home, Ms. Devanesam John, is filled with a passion and dedication to serve others, especially children. Ms. John informed us that the top item on the Home's "wish-list" was a vehicle. Our charity fund couldn't afford such a purchase at that time, so the focus was turned toward immediately

achievable goals such as cleaning, painting and providing better organization. We started our year of fundraising, while simultaneously planning hands on work inside the orphanage. The Committee was sensitive to the needs of the Home as laid out by the Director.



Right away our organization purchased and delivered easily affordable items, such as a rice cooker, vacuum cleaner, fans, clothes drying rack, irons and ironing boards, soap, baby powder, lotion and other practical items.

Next, our volunteers tackled a central room that was completely packed with donated items. Bags and boxes had collected into an unmanageable pile for those running the home. A truck and

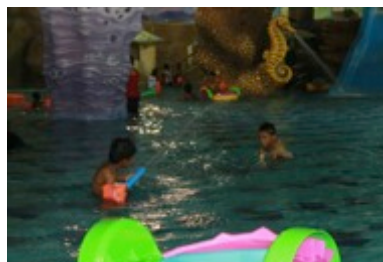
driver was sourced (thanks to Mr. Wong who helped us there) and items were loaded aboard. The donations were transported offsite where IWA ladies could sort, dispose of, or save the items as needed. This work became a social event for some of our members.

Each volunteer took home one giant mound of donated clothing which was washed and returned later to the Home.

Once the room was empty, it was then cleaned and painted along with the adjacent hallway. The room has thus been successfully re-purposed into a study area/classroom, and will be fitted with built in desks by a corporate sponsor.

Next, the second floor storage space was evaluated and cleaned of debris and prepped for painting. A corporate donor volunteered to repurpose this small but useful space. Thank you to Jamie, CEO of Esterpolymer, who fit the room with shelving, proper lighting and a new door. A safer set of stairs leading to this room is on our to do list, so that it can be utilized for needed storage.

A plumber has been out to check the drainage issue, but that still has not been resolved. Often one of the showers has standing water.



In May, the Puspanesam Home children were treated to a day at an indoor water park by the gracious people at Today's Market in Ulu Tiram. There was no cost involved for this day of fun. Many of our members volunteered to chaperone. Uber Taxi service provided complementary transportation to and from the park. The drivers entered into the spirit of the thing by jumping

into our group photo! It was an incredible day of fun, and the kids were all smiles. We will plan another excursion over an upcoming school holiday.

IWA volunteers are assisting the Home now with the compilation and the publication of a government required pamphlet that includes photographs and biographies of the children in their care. Each child is being interviewed and photographed in preparation for this promotional literature, and it is a work in progress.

