June 6 2024

Dear Sue and members of Packenham IWC,

How time flies! Here we are into June and today Sweden celebrates its national day with the blue and yellow flag flying everywhere, folk dancers in national costume and children performing in local parks and squares. If you are lucky today then you’ll avoid the showers and although the sun is shining there’s a cool wind.

Our club has had a very successful term with well-attended monthly meetings with interesting speakers and tasty dinners. A group meets every other week for a walk round a local nature reserve, doing so regardless of weather and low temperatures. But Swedes are hardy outdoor people!

We are great supporters of Panzi Hospital in the Republic of Congo. I’m sure I have written about this before but our efforts are always ongoing. Dr Mukwege, the resident consultant gynecologist works tirelessly under threat from government and rebel troops. The UN no longer gives him protection as he stood as a candidate in the presidential election. No chance of winning though in a corrupt country.

A recent UNICEF ambassador who visited the hospital in Congo said that the violence towards women and children has escalated. Every day Panzi treats and operates women and very small children who have been subjected to rape. Unbelievable in our world. Örebro IWC is passionate about supporting the vital work done at the hospital, where rehabilitation is also an important part of rebuilding the lives of those who have suffered.

We were privileged to be given a talk at our April meeting by a Swedish doctor who often travels to Congo to work at the hospital for shorter periods. We were all deeply moved by her commitment and the graffic information she gave us.

We also continue to support the purchase and training of dogs that work in the Swedish Customs sector. The State are in greater need than ever in our country as the drug smuggling has increased immensely.

The Mayflower fund is also one of our charities, whereby we support children from under privileged families, giving them some extra fun with outings and activities.

We appreciate the Friendship Bouquet which you regularly send and where we can share all the super gatherings and meetings that your club has. We certainly live in two different cultures, but the fundamentals and ties of Inner Wheel are definitely there!

We won’t have a club meeting now until September. Sweden takes time out from Midsummer. The light is amazing just now. In our part of the country we have very little darkness at night. It’s magical.

Our members wish you and your IWC all the best in enjoying your meetings and the hard work you put in to ‘Shine a light\*.

Janice Karlsson

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Örebro IWC