

DANCE EXTRAVAGANZA planned as a Gumboots Fundraiser

Venue: The Dance Factory 31 May 2008

Dance Groups - Alex Choir - Big Prize Auction - Lucky Ticket Draw - Leratong Art Sale - Drinks & Snacks. Get your friends together for a **FUN**, entertaining evening and help **SUPPORT** the **GUMBOOTS PROJECTS**.

For more information or to become a Gumboots donor, visit our website www.gumboots.org.za or phone Jenny Prangley on 082 928 8806



Leratong pre-school

The pre-school grows...

The first quarter of this year has been very active with school enrolment increasing hugely. The position over the last two years is reflected as follows:

	No. of Pupils	Increase	% Increase
2006	110		
2007	140	30	27%
2008	177	37	27%
Total		67	54%

Whilst in terms of providing support to the community, these increases are positive, they have also placed an enormous strain on resources and Peggy and her team of dedicated teachers and support staff are really battling. To cope with the increase, two new classrooms have recently been added by way of a wooden cabin at the top school and the conversion of the use of the new library as a classroom. Two new teachers have been employed, but the ongoing challenge of paying salaries at the end of each month is often not met.



Inspirational Peggy – principal, pastor, DA counsellor & friend

How Gumboots helps

The areas in which Gumboots is providing ongoing assistance are as follows:

- All food and provisions, excluding perishables
- Ongoing repairs and maintenance of the premises
- School outings
- Medical aid and pension contributions for the four key senior members of staff
- Individual child support
- Supplementing teachers' salaries. Gumboots' resources do not enable us to provide regular monthly assistance, but over the last few years we have been able to assist approximately three times per year.

Despite these problems all the children are continuing to receive loving care, stimulation and nutrition in these early years of their education. This is largely through the generosity of Gumboots donors to whom we say a **big thank you!**



Khandaza (right) & his brother – recipients of individual & family donations in the extended Leratong support programme

Where has your money gone?

The income statement below reflects expenditure over the last two financial years:

	28 Feb 07	28 Feb 08
Donations received	290,058	137,726
Expenditure	182,295	247,456
Bank charges	109	–
Computer expenses	3,978	–
Food & provisions	19,654	22,466
Staff gratuities	71,200	94,583
Staff medical aid & pension	42,681	59,100
Replacement of window panes	7,300	–
Educational material	–	1,580
New Classroom	23,012	29,718
Xmas party	800	215
Garden project	5,766	2,765
Child support	2,200	2,071
Playground equipment	–	6,000
Telephone & Internet	3,335	4,818
School outings	2,260	5,020
Repairs & maintenance	–	19,119
Surplus (shortfall)	107,763	(109,730)

Sigiya Sonke

Music & drums beat out in Alex

The Jazz Club in Alex came alive on a Friday in mid-Feb to showcase the Sigiya Sonke dancers and to thank the visiting Lightfeet & others for their contributions. A crowd of visiting guests & supportive locals gathered in the yard as the music got louder & the beats more passionate with about 150 people clapping & ululating around the thatched boma.

The dancers put on a spectacular performance – pantsula, ballet, traditional, hip-hop, jive. As always one of their new routines was a huge hit starting off as a gentle ballet & then breaking out into a boisterous township jive. Zenzele choreographed a very moving ballet piece. A few new young members (like Petunia) danced with the same energy & enthusiasm as the older stalwarts. And of course it's impossible to get through one of these dance events without the Affirmative Action mlungus doing their booting bit too – “*isikhathi sishintshile*”.

The evening ended with an emotional blues song from Figile Sadomo, one of the lead singers in the Soweto Gospel Choir – culminating with a rousing National Anthem that rang out over Alex.



**Enthusiasm,
energy and
extraordinary
talent!**

Nomsa's lucky break

Last newsletter featured Nomsa Mugwai, one of the most enthusiastic & talented dancers in the group. At the Christmas party (also held at the popular Jazz Club), she was given the prize for “being everything to everyone”. And since then she has been even further rewarded... a Gumboots family in the UK decided to donate in lieu of Christmas presents last year, and the collection was enough to send another dancer to the United Church School where Zenzele & Deli go.

We unanimously voted for Nomsa, and John had the pleasure of giving her the good news... “*I had to wait till the day before school opened to ensure that there was a place available for her. With this positive news, I visited Nomsa & her granny in their small one-roomed home that they share with 10 others. I asked Nomsa what she felt about the Church School – she replied that it was a dream of hers to go there one day – well how would you like to go tomorrow?! You can imagine her response and how there wasn't a dry eye in sight!*” Well I can imagine whose eyes were certainly not dry!



Zenzele, Deli and Nomsa with Christia, the school principal

Nomsa has settled in amazingly and has just been chosen to represent the school in the Science Olympiad. This is certainly a Gumboots success story & we are very grateful to Nat & Sally Trotman for their generosity. Further funding is needed for her final year at school, but we are confident that with positive thought this will somehow be provided.

Events

The group is always happy to perform. At a recent corporate event, 6-8 dancers were requested to perform on a small stage with a “carnival” theme... with 17 dancers turning up to reward the crowd.

They also danced at the annual Krugersdorp Festival recently & came a happy third place.

Easter outing

Easter Monday was a time for a break from dancing & the chance to hike on an Emmarentia River Ramble.

The Treasure hunt, Braai, Dancing, Singing, Cake for Jenny's 60-something-birthday – all contributed to a happy holiday for 25 of the Sigiya Sonke group.



Easter picnic party at Delta

Khazimula & Food Gardening

Full House at the Children's Shelter

The Khazimula Children's Shelter, a Gumboots Foundation supported project in the Lidgetton Valley of KwaZulu-Natal, is bursting at its seams with a full house of 30 children, accommodated in three dormitories.

There was an auspicious start to the second year of operations with a visit from Holland of four young women who are final year students at the Academy of the Arts at Maastricht. They have been staying at Khazimula and working miracles with the children in the field of the arts.

Led by Candice Isherwood, the girls brought a revolutionary approach to developing artistic talents of young people by encouraging them to discover their own hidden artistic abilities and to build on this. This is very therapeutic for the children who have come from disturbed and disadvantaged backgrounds. The project has proved so successful that they have been invited by numerous interested parties to explain their techniques to schools and teachers from Howick to Mooi River.



The four Dutch girls from Maastricht with the founder of the Khazimula Children's Shelter and Skills Training Project, Mr. John Tungay

On 24 April the teams of newly discovered groups of artists, known as "Aloud," "Rise and Shine" and "Future Makers" will give a performance at the Lythwood Lodge 5-star Hotel in the Lidgetton Valley before the four Dutch young women return to their homeland. Many artists and opinion formers from the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands have been invited to attend.

Gumboots Seedbank



The Gumboot Seedbank policy is bearing fruit by encouraging more and more families to grow their own vegetables at home – as seen here in one of the Midlands schools.

Meanwhile, the over-all health of Khazimula's children continues to improve thanks to the growing of many crops at Khazimula – using seeds from the Gumboot Seedbank. Maize, cabbages, potatoes and tomatoes are proving the mainstay of vegetable production at Khazimula.

The children are encouraged to participate in all organic gardening activities and to assist with the feeding of the pigs and poultry where a 70 per cent laying of eggs was achieved this summer! Seeds from the Gumboot Seedbank have been distributed far and wide resulting in many other successful vegetable garden projects in KwaZulu-Natal. A second batch of seeds will soon be required for the orphanages of Mozambique.



“Once again, the efforts of people supporting the Gumboot Foundation are making a real difference to the lives of many.”

The KZN District Governor of Rotary, Richard Fisher, visited the Khazimula Children's Shelter to watch a performance of these disadvantaged children.

Paballo Ya Batho Batho

The weekly outreach

Gumboots' representative, Marc Echstein, first visited Paballo in November last year. He reports that when he met Ndai and his team at the Central Methodist Church in Joburg's CBD, he was a bit sceptical. What could these guys achieve? There are so few of them in here with such limited resources, and so many people out there who need help.

His doubts were soon silenced when he attended an outreach the following week. The volunteers all gather for a briefing, preparation of the medical supplies and collection of the food. And then depart in cars and bakkies for the trip out to meet the different communities who live in extraordinary difficult circumstances on the streets of Joburg. Marc had the following to say:

“Ndai and Sam ran the whole programme brilliantly, and the dedication of all the volunteers was amazing. I was really challenged by how all these people are giving of their time and energy for this worthy cause.

Normally the homeless are given bread and soup, but once a year Paballo organises a special Christmas dinner. Many people sleeping on the streets of Joburg are treated to a proper meal... a unique event for most of them I'm sure.



Volunteers visit the homeless community

So on the 19th of December we hit the streets, armed with vehicles full of delicious chicken stew, plus hundreds of bottles of Coca-Cola that were left over from the Night of a 1000 Drawings event. People received their meals with such joy, and I was blessed to be able to play a small part in this.

One moment I doubt I will ever forget was at our last stop, when people were queuing behind the bakkie to receive their food, and one of the guys broke out into song. Before long, nearly everyone was singing and dancing to the tune of 'Malibongwe' (God be praised).

I'm sure that many people who are forced to sleep on Joburg's streets at night are praising God for what Paballo Ya Batho has done for them. It is definitely an inspiring organisation to be involved in!”



Joining together in praise songs on a cold night

How to get involved

Paballo goes out onto Joburg's city streets with food, medical help and emotional support for those in need every Wednesday at 6pm, and they need all the help they can get.

Don't hesitate to come and join them at the Central Methodist Church, corner of Prichard and Small streets.

You will find it is so much more than just a handout – it is a really moving, rewarding and emotional win-win experience.



Mothers receiving toys and refreshments at Paballo last Christmas.