

2010 is here at last - and along with it the hopes and dreams for the Football World Cup. South Africa is ready... vibes, vuvuzelas and visitors... let's hope there will be some positive spinoffs for our Gumboots Foundation's projects. **LADUMA!**

We have started this year with a great boost to our funding thanks to the UK Team's Christmas Fundraiser and a generous donation from Brita Filtered Water. Many thanks for helping to make a difference to the 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

Gumboots UK

SPECIAL THANKS for sponsored fundraising events

Over the past two years, Gumboots UK has had fantastic support from a number of amazing people, who through their personal pain and physical endurance have raised thousands of pounds.

- Bridget Binnell and her team who ran the Budapest Half-Marathon, and can you believe it, one of them without shoes!
- Leigh Pedersen who ran the Two Oceans Marathon in South Africa.
- Richard Thomson, Dai Thomas, Dom Mahoney, Lara Gardner and Arthur Dyer who rode all or part of the 1 000-mile journey from Lands End to John

Start



Finish



The Lands End-John O'Groats Experience

O' Groats. Dai unfortunately came off his bike in Scotland and broke his hip, but despite taking him months to get back on his feet, is remarkably positive about the experience.

- And finally at the end of 2009 Justin Maritz who ran the New York Marathon. From Gumboots UK, Gumboots SA and all the projects that benefited, we say a very big thank you. Your energy, time and generosity really have made a difference to many young lives.



Team Gumboots in the Budapest Half-Marathon



Kgodisho and Paballo



Tsholofelo and her new siblings

Other Project News

The Kadey Home

The Kadey family has two new siblings – Kgodisho, a boy of 4 and his little sister, 3-year-old Paballo. They have joined because their situation was beyond appalling...

Their young mother, about 25, was living with her 4 children in a hovel built of mud brick – poverty that is hard to describe. With all the rains of the last month one wall gave way and collapsed, fortunately hurting no one. They moved in with their granny into an already crowded room, hardly any better than the one they'd left. The walls haven't been painted for about 50 years, thick with fat and smoke stains, dark, dank

and smelly. There are probably ten in the room, two beds, half are sleeping on the floor. The mother is very unwell, very thin with the tell-tale signs of the story we have seen so often.

So it was agreed that the two younger children would move into the Kadey Home – it is early days but they seem to be adjusting, both still very shy and on the face of it they seem healthy. Tsholofelo is like a little mother in caring for them. This brings the total in the home to nine – and we are grateful to Moss for his continued support.



Sigiya Sonke

Education is key

Congratulations to Zenzele and Nomsa who passed their matric. This is a great achievement, especially as they only started at the United Church School (UCS) in 2008. The overall pass rate for the country is a dismal 60% – the state education system verging on being dysfunctional – so this is all the more reason why the Gumboots' focus on education is critical.

We took them and their families out to dinner...

Zenzele: "I have never been this happy in my life. Thanks to Gumboots for making me to be the best that I can be and for being my second parents." His sms later said: "i want 2 thank u 4 last night frm the bottom of my heart.. wait till i have my own money then i'm taking u out"

Nomsa: "First of all, I'd like to thank the man upstairs for everything, then my family for their support. And not forgetting the Gumboots Foundation and Jack and Beauty – they've played a vital role in my life. They are part of my success story – which I am about to accomplish. I would like to do a degree in Bio-Medicine because I owe it to my Mum."

Since then, Zenzele has started a diploma in dance at the Moving into Dance Academy in Newtown, affiliated with CIDA City Campus – his big smile has returned! Sadly Nomsa was not able to pursue her dream this year, but both of them are keen to teach dancing and other school subjects, earning some pocket money too. Once more this is an opportunity for the Gumboots projects to meld... they will be teaching the Kadey Kids and creating a good outlet for the children while doing so.



Zenzele, Nomsa and partners at the Matric Ball – highlight of the year?



Thank you to all those generous donors who have supported them and the other children at UCS for the past two years. We now have two more children who are at the school, giving them the necessary platform for a successful career down the line... here's to many more celebratory matric dinners!

End-of-year celebration

The Dance Warehouse was full to bursting for the end-of-year celebration as they showcased their amazing ability and diversity once more. Jack is handing over a lot of the training and choreography to the younger members now and we witnessed their talent. We were also privileged to watch the enthusiastic Junior Group doing stunning Michael Jackson routines.

The place was alive with music, heat, dance, drumming and ENERGY. Much ululating and clapping accompanied the certificates and prizes awards.

The group will be hosting a dance event every few months at the Warehouse to which all are welcome – these evenings are inspiring and heart-warming. Please get in touch with us if you would like to be there for the next one.



The colourful pantsula guys in action



Gardening Gogos



Radishes for Africa!

Check out the food garden!

The garden that was built opposite the Warehouse by Kidlinks USA volunteers last year has enjoyed a few harvests! The garden is flourishing, thanks to the Highveld summer rain, and it's feeding the dancers and their families. Thank you to everyone who helped raise the funds and to the volunteers who created it. Some of the children spend time with Beauty weeding and replanting the garden, and the mothers and grandmothers have helped to pick veges. We pledge to continue to support it to ensure that it is maintained and nourished.

Ratang Bana

Ingrid Moloi continues to back up Ratang Bana's vision "To give a smile to all orphans and vulnerable children". This underpins two service areas:

- The provision of care, counselling and financial support (for food, clothing, funerals, education) to 130 orphans and vulnerable children.
- Support for the Red Roses Football Club, providing recreational, motivational and development activities for over 90 boys, many of whom are orphaned and vulnerable.

Ten families benefited from Gumboots' recent support in the form of food parcels; and four staff members were able to receive a small stipend. Their need is unending and urgent further support is required. Fortunately Ingrid does receive some support from churches, companies and individuals.

With limited funds and resources she still manages to work miracles...

- Ten orphans are taken every weekend to the SA Music & Theatre Academy. They are given transport, food, accommodation, and tuition in singing, dance & drama. This gives them the opportunity for training, recognition of talent and possible jobs with the SABC when they need actors. I heard one of them say to Ingrid as he left her office, "Next time I will be doing something to help you".
- Ratang Bana staff members (most of whom are voluntary) are taking turns to go to a government skills development programme, Eight have gone so far, the new members getting an opportunity in life training.
- They were able to organise a few outings too:
 - Educational tours to Hector Pietersen museum, Constitution Hill and Museum Africa
 - Tour with Miss World & Miss SA
 - Kimbler Park picnic
 - Christmas party at the Zoo



Ingrid hard at work on her admin

Red Roses Football Club

Now in its 6th year under Ingrid's support, there are 5 teams, from Under 12 to Open, and they are all doing well. The Under 17 team last year won the Little Champs Alexandra Sports Festival. Through Ratang Bana they are all provided with team spirit, training, equipment, and regular league matches. They also get the opportunity to further their talent through collaboration with Social Development, Health, Education & Culture departments.

The club has also got involved in a "Giving Back" project in association with the Sandton SPCA – the boys have taken on a major role as caretakers of animals in Alex and they spend spare time advising residents on how to promote healthy & happy pets. Kennels and longer chains are provided, and abandoned dogs are identified and then get collected by the SPCA.



Nkosi's inspiration helps them in the office



God Bless Africa – Ratang Bana's prayer



Leratong news

The Mkhize Brothers – part of the Leratong Family

As part of Peggy's "Phetoho Project" to help orphans and vulnerable children, this newsletter has been dedicated to two amazing young brothers that she took under her wing last year. Velani (19) and Prince (18) moved into a spare room at the upper Leratong school and their courageous story is moving beyond words...

They grew up on a dairy farm in Ixopo KZN with their mother and stepfather and 3 half-siblings, never knowing their father. In 2002 their mother died, and the boys (+11 & 10) continued to live with their stepfather, working on the farm after school as they had always done. But it wasn't long before the stepfather moved off leaving Velani to support the family: his brother of 11 with a serious leg injury, and the 3 little ones (9, 6, 2) – the little child-headed household barely survived with the food he got from the farm. There was even a period when he had to move off from the farm as the law said he was too young to work there and so was not allowed to live there either – a concrete water pipe became his home.

Velani always felt he could do well at high school, but had no money, uniform, books etc., so when one of the farm workers said he could move to Johannesburg with them, he left his siblings and moved to Alex – he was only 13. His first year went well, he worked hard and had a home with the family, the teachers at school gave him car-cleaning jobs so he earned a little money to send back to KZN. But then things began to go downhill when the family insisted he work for them as well. His marks dropped, he had very little food and even less hope. He barely scraped through his exams. "But I knew my rights" – and that gave him the courage to continue to work hard and to read - read - read... especially motivational books, such as Joel Austin's "Seven ways of living a better life".

In 2007, his matric year, it was even more difficult for him. The teachers were on strike, there were no books, he tried to study late



A brave and resourceful Velani

at school – but while walking home one night he was attacked for cash (that he didn't have), and his books and calculator were thrown into the Jukskei River. So now he had to do his reading at home... "Who are you to think that reading will help you to pass?"... but this negativity didn't stop him. "We can't sleep while you have the lights on"... so he pulled the curtain across the one-roomed house and read by candlelight. "You are using up all our candles for electric cuts"... so he collected old candles from the cemetery. And so it went on, he had no money, no school uniform and he was afraid he was going to fail his matric. Where on earth do you get the strength and courage to carry on?

It was now that he met some people who were of great help: Banele, the head prefect at school; the pastor at his church; a mentor who assisted him with career guidance. And he continued to read – a book about a boy

from Zim who did well in the States helped to inspire him. Against great odds, he passed his matric with a school leaving certificate, but as is so often the case, things did not get easier.

Velani went back to KZN to help his brothers and sisters. He worked on the farm by day and studied at night-school doing an admin / clerical / computer course. He was showing amazing entrepreneurial skills as a salesman, selling dairy products at fairs, sports events, tournaments – and making a lot of money for the farmer, and being paid a pittance for it. He was earning R300 after rent – and was struggling to feed and clothe the family, and of course he was unable to pay the fees for the night-school.

He told the farmer he would have to quit... and the response was "I'm trying to take monkeys from the forest to bring them to work here, and now they want to go back to the forest"! Velani's thoughts at the time were

Leratong (continued)



Velani is like a big brother to the Kadey Kids – here he is playing in the Leratong courtyard with Thabang.

“This man who is doing so well is doing so at the expense of others – he doesn’t know ‘that you are only a person because of a person’.” Deep thoughts! The farmer then called him a dog, turfed him out, withheld his bags, threatened him, turned his dogs on him, chased him on his scooter – and finally Velani found the power to jump the electric fence and escape... he also had the courage to go back and collect his bags the next day.

So what now? It was early 2009. By chance his old friend Banele got in touch with him – now the ANC secretary for Youth Development, he had met Peggy from Leratong and learnt that she had a room at the school – and he offered to pay for Velani and Prince to come to Alex...

And so they have been in the room for a year now. Prince is studying for his matric and will do well says Velani as he is bright and has the added advantage of the better circumstances. Velani has not been able to get a job yet – he helps in the Leratong garden, he reads the Bible and his motivational books, goes to church. This helps him but he is still afraid...

“I am afraid for my sisters in KZN who are being abused. I am worried about myself for today and for tomorrow, even though the Bible gives me the faith and the confidence I almost lost. Sometimes I think that dying may be better cos in my heart things are killing me. Then I read my books and have faith in the things I cannot see – I realise that ‘Nothing is impossible for God’. There is a Zulu saying that ‘Everything can hurt, but nothing is worse than having no place to sleep’, and I know that I have a place to sleep and I am happy and grateful for that”.

What courageous boys!

This is a wonderful opportunity for Gumboots to get involved in some way to make a difference to the lives of the Mkhize brothers.